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Collier's

FEBRUARY 7, 1953 • FIFTEEN CENTS

YOU'RE A SUCKER IF YOU CASH MY CHECK

A Forger Tells How The Racket Works

IKE'S PIPEFITTER

What Will Durkin Do?

Where Are Baseball's .300 HITTERS?

MARY A BECK
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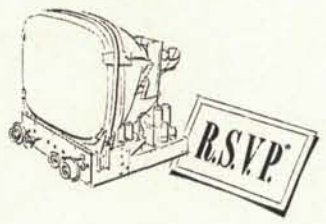
For Years of Enjoyment

The CAPEHART "Jamestown." Unusual in styling, graceful in proportions, an outstanding example of Capehart cabinetry. 21-inch Crystal-Clear Picture, Symphonic-Tone. Miracle chassis meets all requirements for UHF and VHF in primary and *fringe* reception areas. $369.95**



The Capehart is built for the years. Its cabinetry, fashioned from rare woods by master craftsmen, is furniture of enduring beauty. Its new chassis—with new circuitry, vastly improved tube types and *Reserve Supply Video Power—gives unequalled clarity, brilliance and stability to picture reception. Capehart's Symphonic-Tone brings to your ears the subtlest shading of voice and orchestra. Here is a truly fine instrument that will assure you years of enjoyment and unsurpassed performance.

Look at this fine Capehart today. For the name of your nearest dealer, see your classified directory or write Fort Wayne.

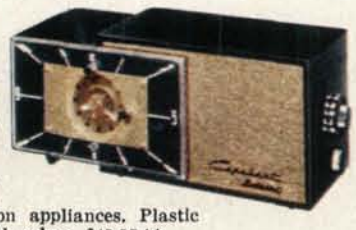
You can own a Capehart for as little as $229.95.

Capehart — AN IT&T ASSOCIATE

CAPEHART-FARNSWORTH CORPORATION
Fort Wayne 1, Indiana
An Associate of International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation

The CAPEHART "Charlestown." Distinctive in cabinetry, brilliant in performance. 21-inch Crystal-Clear Picture, exclusive Symphonic-Tone. New chassis meets all requirements for UHF and VHF primary and *fringe* reception area. $399.95**

The CAPEHART Table Radio (Model T-522). A table radio as distinctive in styling as it is in performance. Automatic volume control, tone compensation, vernier tuning. Plastic cabinet in choice of rich colors. $29.95 **



The CAPEHART "Deluxe 6" Clock Radio (Model TC-62). The most beautiful Clock Radio in the world. 6-tube performance. An accurate alarm, a superb radio, turns on appliances. Plastic cabinet in choice of rich colors. $49.95 **

**Zone 1 prices

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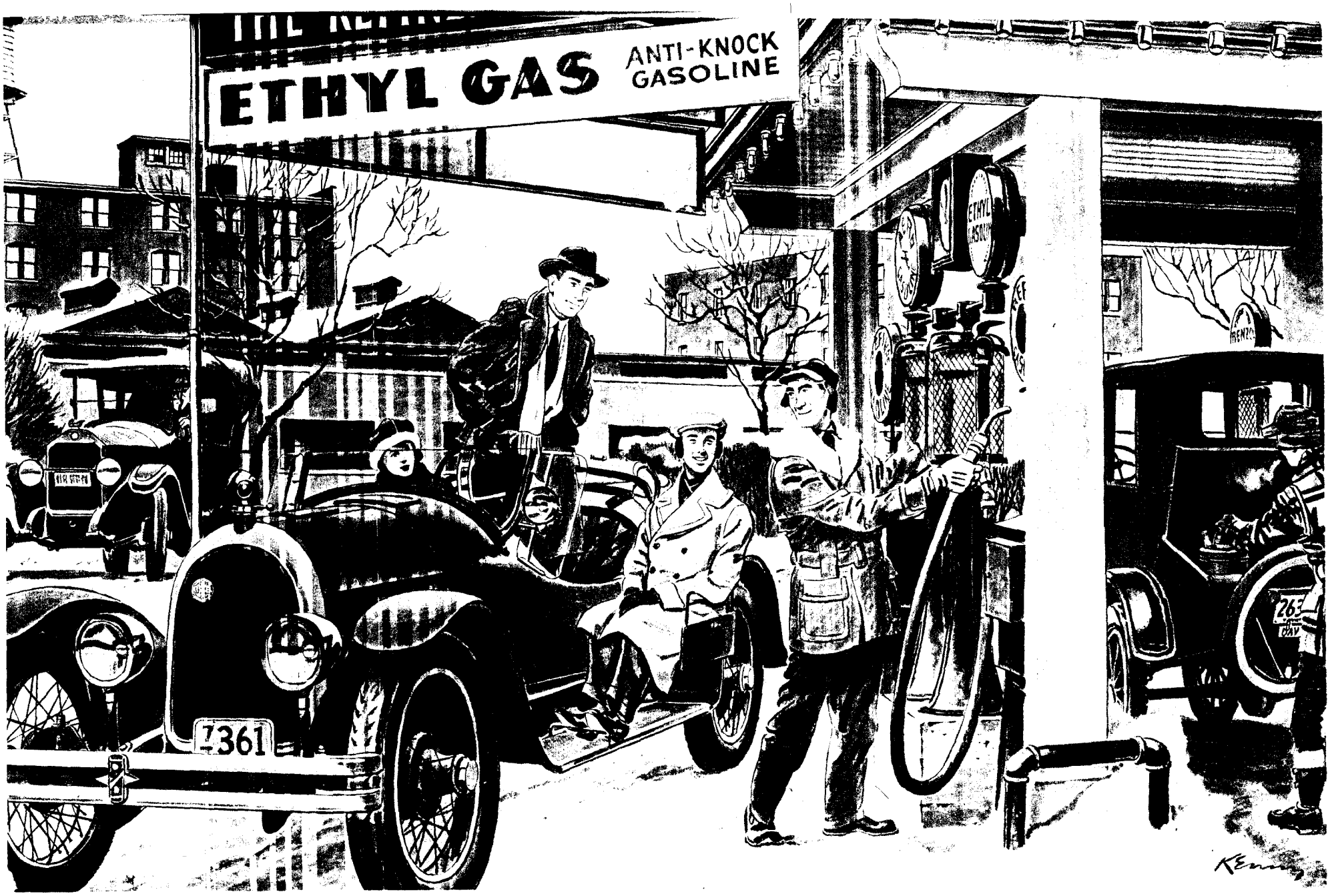
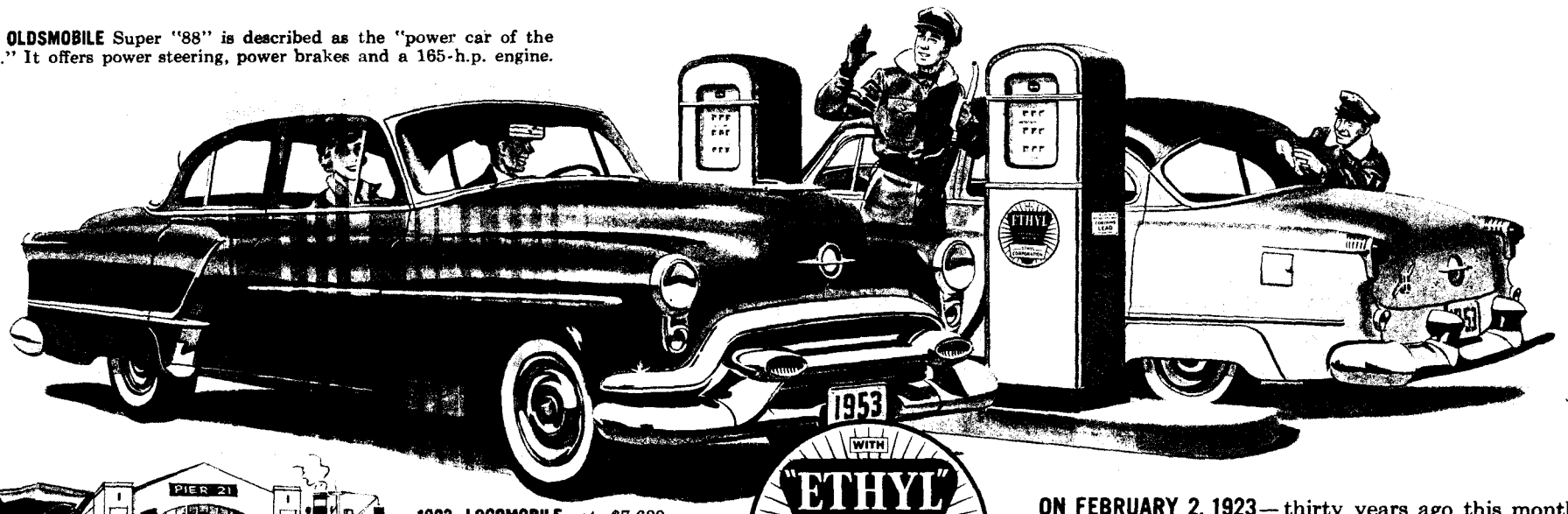


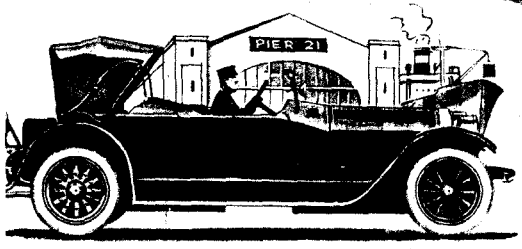
1920 KISSEL Goldbug, filling up at the first "Ethyl" gasoline pump, had a six-cylinder, 60-h.p. engine. One passenger was left "out in the cold" on a seat that pushed in like a drawer when not in use.

TODAY AS YESTERDAY

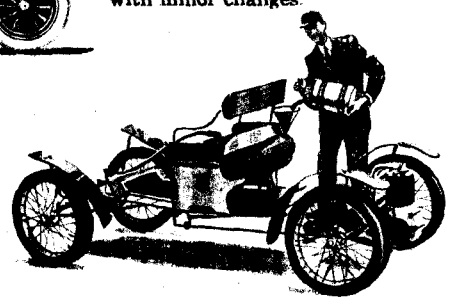
cars run their best on the best gasoline

1953 OLDSMOBILE Super "88" is described as the "power car of the year." It offers power steering, power brakes and a 165-h.p. engine.





1923 LOCOMOBILE, at $7,600, was the highest-priced American stock car that year. This Model 48 had been introduced in 1911 and lasted until 1929, with minor changes.



1903 ORIENT Buckboard sold for $375, stripped of frills. It was promoted as the "cheapest auto in the world." A 4-cylinder engine, in the rear, pushed the light frame along at a lively speed.

WITH "ETHYL" (TRADE MARK) ANTIKNOCK COMPOUND

ETHYL CORPORATION

ETHYL
CORPORATION
New York 17, New York
Ethyl Antiknock Ltd., in Canada

ON FEBRUARY 2, 1923—thirty years ago this month—car owners went out of their way to stop at this little station in Dayton, Ohio. They wanted to try a new kind of gasoline . . . a gasoline that promised to stop the "knock" that was plaguing them.

This new gasoline was "Ethyl" gasoline. And these first purchasers were delighted to find that it really did stop "knock." But that wasn't all. It opened the door to the modern, high compression engines that give today's cars such thrilling power and performance.

To get the most enjoyment from your car, fill 'er up with "Ethyl" gasoline. For today, as yesterday, cars run their best on the best gasoline.

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Picture OF THE MONTH

If this were just a picture about Hollywood, it would be just another picture, but it's more than that. This is a picture about people—interesting people. These people happen to live in the fabled and fabulous world of sables and swimming pools, of loveliness and loneliness. It is called "The Bad and the Beautiful" because it is about a man of consuming ambition, who used people to achieve his ends. He has the great quality of creativeness, but as a social force he is personally destructive—an amazing performance by Kirk Douglas.

But it is also about a woman—a woman who is beautiful and who happened to love this bad man. Here's Lana Turner in her most exciting dramatic role. The severest critic will have to admire her acting as she plays a movie star, catapulted into fame by the genius of her mentor. Hers is a life of romance and rapture and pain. Her love is pulsating, with but one alloy—the mad desire for a niche in filmdom's Hall of Fame.

With these brilliant stars, is one of Hollywood's most outstanding, Oscar-bound casts. Handsome Walter Pidgeon as the worldly, assured executive, Dick Powell and Gloria Grahame as the writer and his wife who are carried along in this powerful surge towards fame... Barry Sullivan, Gilbert Roland—all hand-picked for the greatest roles of their careers.

"The Bad and the Beautiful" is the Hollywood of today. It takes you inside the studios where the make-up man's skill erases sorrows and yearnings, where glamor is born ... brings you on to the actual sets where pictures are made, shows you a picture within a picture... carries you to Hollywood's palatial homes. It tells the truth about a business of legends. You'll see Hollywood with the roof-tops ripped away... with its people revealed, the notorious and the famous... the failures and the successes ... the bad and the beautiful.

★ ★ ★

An M-G-M picture starring LANA TURNER, KIRK DOUGLAS, WALTER PIDGEON, DICK POWELL in "THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL" co-starring Barry Sullivan, Gloria Grahame, Gilbert Roland with Leo G. Carroll and Vanessa Brown. Screen play by Charles Schnee. Based on a story by George Bradshaw. Directed by Vincente Minnelli. Produced by John Houseman.

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February 7, 1953

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The characters in all stories and serials in this magazine are purely imaginary. No reference or allusion to any living person is intended.

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The Cover

Several deductions could be made here. For example: (1) from the number of hats on the rack, everyone is home and presumably in bed; (2) obviously, the dog wants out; (3) naturally, Pop is elected; and (4) it must be snowing, raining or sleeting. The conclusion to be reached is that (a) the setter will renege the instant he is exposed to the elements and (b) Pop will be compelled to arise again at 5:45 A.M. to respond to the barks and whines of the impatient pooch. The moral: raise hamsters, which don't have to leave the house.

Week's Mail

Prefabricated Greeting

EDITOR: I greatly enjoyed designing my own Christmas card from you with the material supplied in your Christmas Editorial (Dec. 27th).

I know I wasn't supposed to take you literally but I knew that Collier's Christmas wish was for Santa to place a bough of peace on every Christmas tree around the world. The angel rings the bells while good Saint Nick obliges.

What a wonderful gift from Santa Claus that would be!

RITA C. LEVY, New Orleans, La.

... Dear Collier's, I've read your rhyme
About the holy Christmastime.
I really studied very hard
Each item on your Christmas card.
And now I come to ask you why
The Star of Stars up in the sky?
Why the angels, why the dove,
On wings of peace from heaven above?
Why the carolers, why the tree?
Please explain this mystery.
I humbly send this protest mild,
And ask you, please, where was the Child?

PATRICK C. BRENNAN, Burlington, Vt.

Command vs. Staff

EDITOR: The article, What's Wrong at the Pentagon? (Dec. 27th), by Dr. Vannevar Bush, sure hits the nail on the head. He brings forth strongly the differentiation between command and staff. Basically and psychologically the designation of the head of a large military organization such as the Army, Navy or Air Force as the Chief of Staff is wrong. The top man is the commander.

In an army you have a corps. Each corps has a commander, and in a division, a subordinate part of a corps, you also have a commander. The staffs are purely and solely advisers to the commander. However, under present designations, the staff has usurped the

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Just a moment, girls!

Pretty soon telephone operators will take over here... but *not* until these men finish what they're doing.

For these are Western Electric people... some of our staff of 17,500 installers... finishing up a new Western Electric switchboard for a dial central office before it's put into service by your Bell telephone company. This is part of our job as the manufacturing unit of the Bell System ...helping to provide more and better telephone service for America. We've been doing it now for over 70 years.

Today, in addition to regular telephone duties, we're also working directly for Uncle Sam... making radar fire control systems for guns, radar bombing systems for planes, electronic control and firing systems for guided missiles and special communications equipment for the Armed Forces. With us it's full speed ahead on both jobs!

Western Electric

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SINCE 1882

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BLACK-DAYLITE TV
WITH ULTRA-VISION

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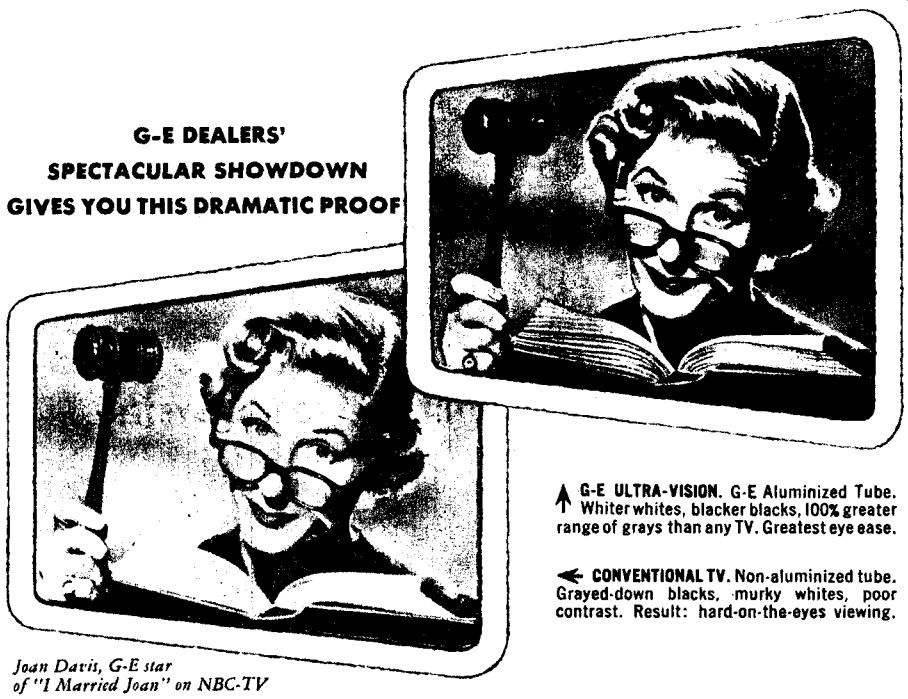
SPECTACULAR SHOWDOWN
GIVES YOU THIS DRAMATIC PROOF



Joan Davis, G-E star of "I Married Joan" on NBC-TV

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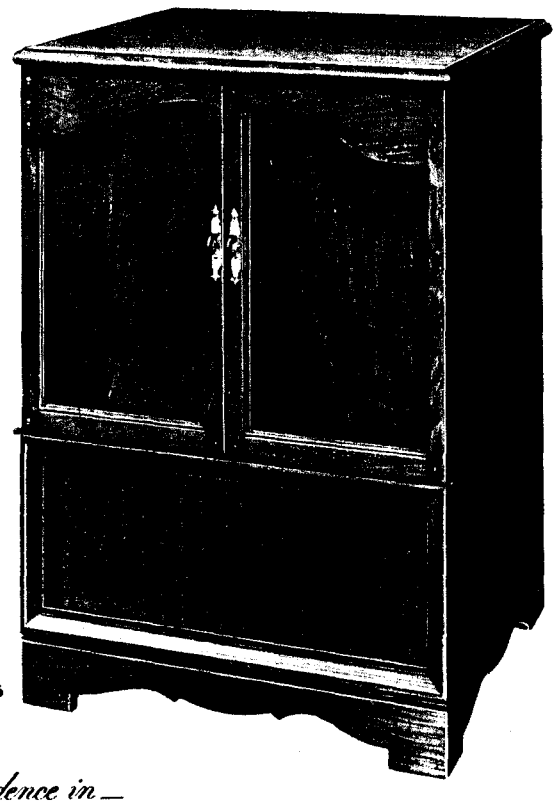
◀ CONVENTIONAL TV. Non-aluminized tube. Grayed-down blacks, murky whites, poor contrast. Result: hard-on-the-eyes viewing.



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See G-E Ultra-Vision in action, next to any other TV. Let your eyes prove G-E offers far more clarity, sharper contrast, greater freedom from glare and reflections than any other make. Even under brightest lights where other TV pictures often fade, G-E Ultra-Vision remains sharp and clear. See TV's most spectacular showdown today.

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command functions, and in many lower echelons the staff has really become the command and issues orders on its own initiative.

This does not apply so much in a combat theater, but in the zone of interior it is a very prevalent procedure. Also it has created a wrong impression in the minds of junior officers who now work for staff jobs instead of command jobs, as their experience indicates that it is the staff that runs things.

The present organization has also created a tremendous increase in staffs. This has been caused by the fact that the staff feels that they must work out any problem down to the minutest detail before transmitting to the subordinate commander, thereby killing his initiative and reducing his position to one of chore boy. In many cases the senior staff undercuts the subordinate commander and goes directly to his subordinates. In addition, today a commander often finds himself saddled with an officer to fill a certain position who has been picked by the senior staff, but who may not be suitable to the commander.

It is firmly believed, as a result of observation, that starting in the Pentagon the staffs of various echelons of commands could be cut 50 per cent and then function more efficiently and more effectively. This would cause the staff to pass to the subordinate command a general directive and permit him to work out the details in accordance with his experience, judgment and conditions under which he is working. It would also give a true picture of the ability of the commander.

The present staff functioning also works in the reverse. Today a commander who makes a mistake can throw it back on his staff. This has created a buck-passing situation which is anything but good for military organizations.

I would like to see Dr. Bush work out an organization table setting forth his ideas in chart form, indicating clearly that the staff is purely an advisory function and is in reality just advisers to the commander. GEORGE H. BRETT,
Lieutenant General, United States Air Force (Ret.),
Winter Park, Fla.

10-Beat Error

EDITOR: I enjoyed very much the piece on Bird Watching with an Electric Eye (Dec. 27th). For the record, I might point out a small error in one caption. The nuthatch's wing beats are actually about 20 per second instead of 30, as stated, and the chickadee (a much smaller bird) does 30 per second. However, I doubt that anyone other than myself has made such measurements so that no one will have the basis for criticism. C. H. GREENEWALT,
Wilmington, Del.

Though no one else caught the wing-beat error, we are grateful to Mr. C. H. Greenewalt, who took the picture, and who, when he is not photographing birds for Collier's, is president of E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company.

Local Pride

EDITOR: Your answer re Williamsburg of the West to Mr. Zuckerman, of Brooklyn's Williamsburg (Week's Mail, Dec. 27th), is one of the funniest squibs I've read in a long time.

It reminds me of the New York girl who, when she heard I was from Nebraska, straight-facedly said, "Oh, yes! I remember studying in geography that Nebraska had so few people it really isn't entitled to two United States senators." Then she added, "How do you live out there?"

I felt like saying, "In tepees," but resisted, remembering the lady at home who heard I was going to Vassar and said, "That's that seclusive girl's school in the East, isn't it?"
MRS. GILBERT GARDNER, Deerfield, Ill.

They Know Their Crackers

EDITOR: As one of the smaller "independents" in the biscuit industry, Megowen-Educator Food Company took notice of Robert Froman's article (Dec. 20th) titled What Do You Know about Crackers 'n' Cookies?

Although small in size, we are proud of the fact that the Educator company, through the years, has pioneered several of the important developments in this industry. The first Sandvik band sold in the United States, for baking purposes, was purchased by Johnson-Educator Food Company in April, 1931. It was 24 inches in width and 208 feet long. A gas-fired oven, approximately 100 feet in length, was constructed in our bakery at Cambridge. This oven was the first band oven in America.
RALPH G. SMITH, Lowell, Mass.

Collier's Album of Favorite Christmas Art carried the above reproduction of Giotto's Adoration of the Magi with the credit line, "Arena Chapel, Padua, Italy." The credit should have read, "Reproduced from the book Italian Painting, Volume I, published by Skira, Inc., New York."

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with a truly different flavor and aroma_ *extra-mild* FATIMA continues to grow in favor among King-Size cigarette smokers everywhere.

YOU GET an extra-mild and soothing smoke —*plus* the added protection of

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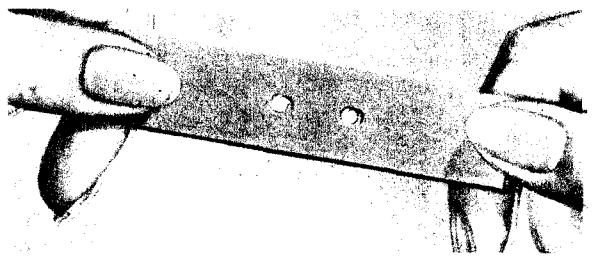
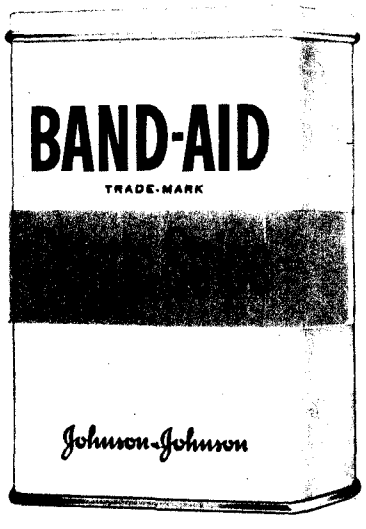
NEW PLASTIC BANDAGE
WON'T LOOSEN IN WATER

FLESH-COLORED!
STAYS NEAT
AND CLEAN!





WATERPROOF
Smooth plastic sheds water, washes clean.

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Inconspicuous—thin and flexible.

STERILE

Johnson-Johnson

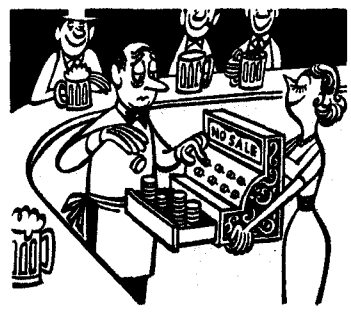
48 STATES OF MIND

By WALTER DAVENPORT

A protest from Mr. Lloyd Cattridge, who explodes as follows from Roanoke, Virginia: "I wasn't alive in the good old days. I don't expect to live far into the glorious future. I'm living *now*, and for Pete's sake, stop telling me how lousy the present is."

★ ★ ★

Should you drop in at Jack Braun's tavern in Kansas City, Missouri, for a solacing glass of beer, please pay for same with nickels and dimes. Or folding money, anyway. He's a good guy,



but a victim of conspiracy. The boys have been tossing silver dollars on Mr. Braun's bar in payment for their drinks, and he'd like to know who spread the news that when he opened the place some months ago he told his wife that he'd give her every silver dollar he took in. In the short time we were in Mr. Braun's place, 15 lads silver-dollared him. "She'll soon be owning the joint," sighed Mr. Braun. "Guess I ought to be glad it's staying in the family."

★ ★ ★

Seems to be something missing in this contribution from a customer in Cheboygan, Michigan. Didn't even bother to sign his name. Anyway, see for yourself. Here's the whole letter: "I have been intending to write to you for some time so I am doing so. I know how busy you are so I do not expect any answer."

★ ★ ★

Mrs. Ella Poffenroth hasn't much trouble with her students. She's superintendent of the Coulee Dam, Washington, High School. A number of members of the local Parent-Teachers Association complained that educational fundamentals were being neglected, that the kids, for example, couldn't spell. So her pupils challenged the PTA to a spelling bee. It was a slaughter. Not only did the parents fall down on such simple words as efficiency and laboratory but some of them were not even able to pronounce them.

★ ★ ★

Now if you should happen to pause during one of your many onerous daily tasks and ask yourself: What in the world is wrong with today's writers of fiction and poetry?, we advise consulting with Dr. Martha Pingel of East Carolina College at Greenville, North Carolina. "Authors," says Dr. Pingel, "are taking the view that we are living in the 4-F age—Fear, Friction, Folly and Frustration." We mentioned this to one of our more cheerful authors, and it sounded pretty pingel to him.

★ ★ ★

Schoolteacher in Laramie, Wyoming, was doling out a little sound advice to a chronically morose pupil. Told the lad it was foolish always to be wishing for something he didn't have. "What else is there to wish for?" he asked.

★ ★ ★

In a few weeks you'll be reading joyous dope from the Southern baseball training camps. All about downy-cheeked southpaws, apple sluggers, second sackers and shortstops destined to make Carl Hubbell, Joe Gordon, Babe Ruth and Marty Marion in their prime look like amateurs. Of course, we won't believe a word of it. But gosh, how glad we'll be to read it.

★ ★ ★

A headlong guy in Indianapolis asks the court for a divorce. Says his wife left him 30 years ago, and he has concluded she probably won't be back. That's precipitate youth for you.

★ ★ ★

There was no clerk at the desk of this hotel Mrs. M. Miller of Mahaska, Kansas, entered. Just an array of keys under a sign: "Take a key. Find your room. Pay when you leave. Sleep well." No clerk in the morning either. So Mrs. Miller put down three bucks and her key and was on her way. Doesn't tell us the name of the town.

★ ★ ★

We're told on authority which has been fairly inaccurate now and then that the Army is about to train a few regiments of soldiers in the new art of neutralizing atomic-bomb duds. If an A-bomb should drop in your vicinity and fail to go off, these lads will march in and denature it so that it won't decide to let go later. Same authority tells us that these men will be awarded the Medal of Honor before going to work.

★ ★ ★

Restaurant owner in Nashua, New Hampshire, asked one of his waitresses where she lived. Said he might want

IRWIN CAPLAN

her in for extra work on Sunday. She said she was flattered and that she lived upstairs over a vacant lot. ▲▲▲

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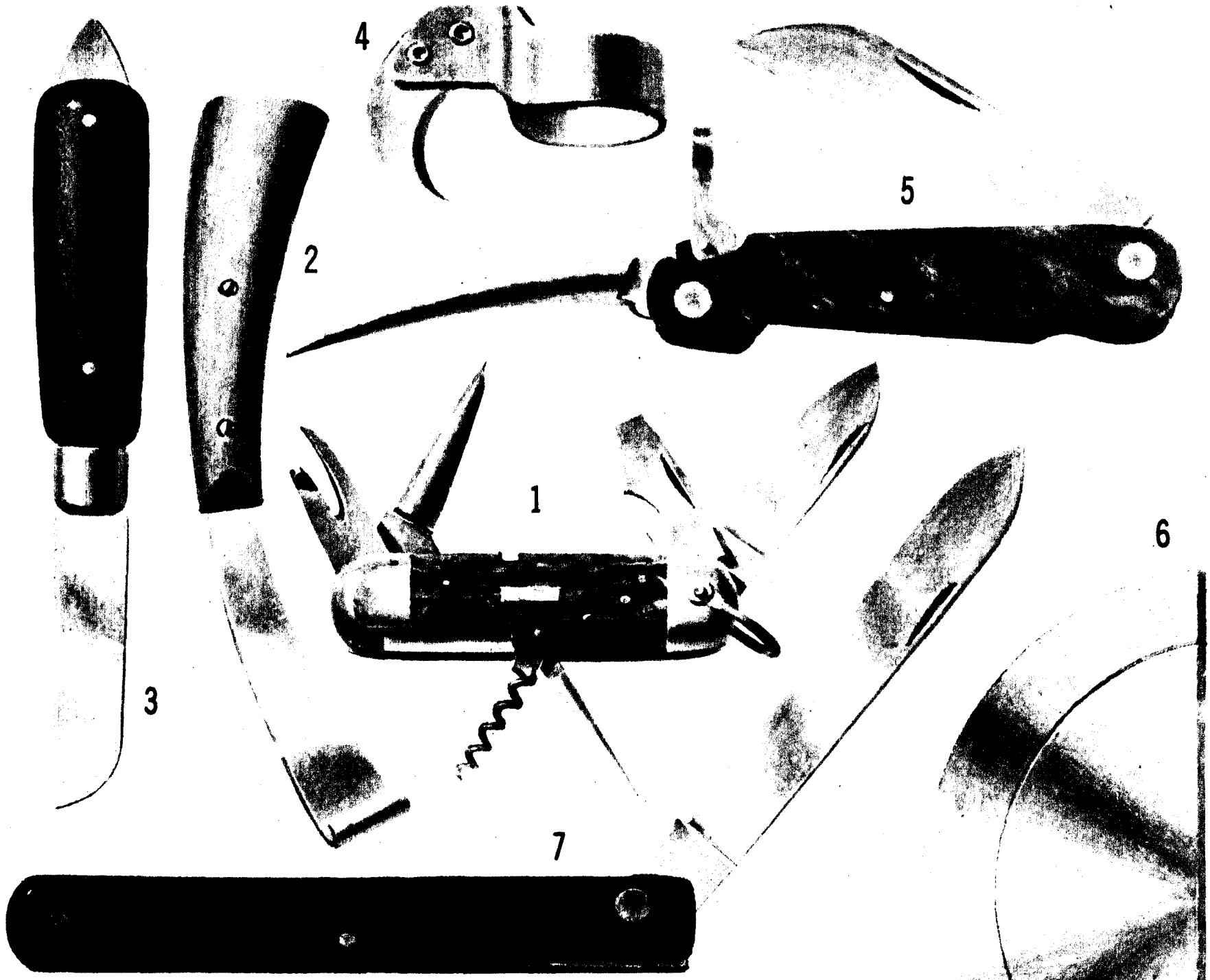

Which one belongs in a sailor's dungarees?

Of course, you're familiar with the knife in the center (1)—the handy pocketknife small boys long for.

But do you know the uses of all the other interesting knives shown on this page?

The farrier's knife (2) is very useful to the blacksmith in trimming inside a horse's hoof before he fits a shoe. With the budding knife (3) the nurseryman can insert a tiny bud from a heavy-bearing peach tree under the bark of a no-good seedling so it will grow into a tree, producing luscious fruit. The ringknife (4) is used by packing clerks—it snips off a cord with the flick of a finger.

You'd be apt to find the rigging knife (5) in a sailor's dungarees. Its strong, sharp blade is just the thing for cutting a rope—and at the other end is a marlin spike for splicing and for loosening tight, water-soaked knots.

The cigar maker uses the handleless blade (6) to clip off the lighting end of a newly rolled cheroot.

And the long thin pocketknife (7) is used by citrus buyers and growers to slice through an orange or grapefruit with one swipe—to see if the crop is ripe and juicy.

Just from this sample, it's pretty plain that when it comes to knives, you have a wide variety to pick from. And you buy the one that's suited to the job you want to do.

Although it may never have occurred to you, that's about the situation you face when it comes to choosing insurance to make your family financially secure. There are many forms of insurance. And in selecting the policies that will give you the most for your insurance dollar it's wise to talk with a man who *knows* insurance—your Travelers agent or broker.

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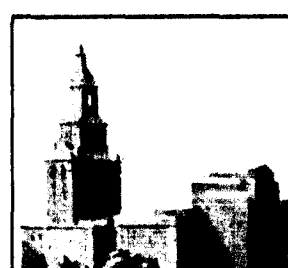

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What We've Learned about

WINTER WARFARE

By PETE[illegible]

Two years ago, the thermometer [illegible] Korea than did enemy weapons. How [illegible]

U. S. ARMY PHOTO

Seoul, Korea

"HOW many wounded?" I asked the medic captain. The captain said, "About fifteen. The rest are frostbites."

The time was early December, 1950—the place a collecting station on the outskirts of Pyongyang. The Eighth Army still held the North Korean capital but time was running out. Stretched on blankets and litters in the pyramidal tent were scores of U.S. 2d Division troops who had fought and straggled their way out of a Chinese trap at Kunu-ri, 75 miles to the north.

Fifteen wounded against scores of frostbites. Red China's entry into the Korean war may have surprised some of our military experts, but it was the cold, as inevitable as a date on the calendar, that really caught them with their winter pants down. Neither the men nor their machines were ready for winter war.

No one knows how many Americans died in no man's land—or were captured—simply because they couldn't cope with the weather. But official records show that 6,000 hospitalized casualties, one out of every five in the winter of 1950-'51, were victims of frostbite or exposure. (The Korean war's first quadruple amputee was a frostbite case.) Add to this record the normal five-to-one ratio of minor cold injuries treated at first-aid stations and returned to duty within 48 hours and we face the conclusion that the thermometer put more American troops out of action than did enemy weapons.

The real shocker to these statistics is that these men suffered in temperatures no colder than prevail in many sections of the United States. The icy "retreat, hell" march by the Marines from the Changjin reservoir to the sea was in the same latitude as southern Pennsylvania. Yet an army can freeze in Pennsylvania, as history recalls, and in terms of modern winter warfare our troops in Korea were almost as bad off as Washington's at Valley Forge.

By the time heavy clothing reached forward units racing for the Yalu River, the men were going the other way and often had to burn or abandon stocks en route.

Vehicles were without antifreeze, gasoline and lubricants froze, batteries cracked, and jeeps were either thawed out by bonfire and blowtorch, towed with their wheels locked or left behind. All the unpreparedness that marked our entry into the Korean police action snowballed into one winter of misery and discontent.

Communist soldiers suffered, too, but at that time their more primitive transport—man power,

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Winterized sentries wear up to 22 pounds of clothing and an 8-pound armored vest

horses, oxen and even camels—functioned better than stalled trucks. Their cotton-padded uniforms were not stylish, but they were warmer than field jackets—and their felt boots were better than our leather ones or the execrable shoepacs, perhaps the most disappointing winter footgear ever devised by a gadget-happy nation.

Last winter the quantity of winter equipment improved, but the latest in cold-weather gimmicks didn't reach the troops until late—and then in driblets.

This winter, for the first time, United Nations ground forces are benefiting from the bitter lessons learned two years ago. They are now unquestionably the best—and most expensively—winterized army in the world. Each front-line American fighting man wears and sleeps in $156.25 worth of cold-weather gear, and so do many other UN soldiers supplied by us.

The Army Quartermaster and Ordnance had not been asleep since World War II—just dozing. The Pentagon knew that any future war, with Russia the likeliest adversary, would demand rugged efficiency in cold-weather gear. But an economy-minded Congress and the lack of urgency hobbled manufacture, restricting it to the pilot-model stage. Now a panoply of up-to-date weapons against cold, first tested in Alaska and then on the Korean battleground, are in mass production.

General James A. Van Fleet, who spent this winter and last in command of the Eighth Army, named what he considers the three most important items of personal equipment: the mountain sleeping bag, the parka and the new insulated boot.

The zippered sleeping bag, stuffed with down in a windproof cotton case and rubberized carrying bag, weighs slightly more than seven pounds, and costs around $36. With a blanket or wool liner, and an air mattress, it affords comfortable sleeping at almost any temperature. The one drawback is the difficulty of unzippering and getting out of the bag in a hurry—something an infantryman has occasion to do.

The knee-length parka was developed in Alaska and perfected in Korea. It has a heavy alpaca-type lining that zippers and buttons into a windproof cotton shell, and the hood is frequently fur-trimmed and has wire stiffening that can be molded to the head.

But it is the insulated boot that draws Van Fleet's—and the GI's—highest praise. Known as the Mickey Mouse, or the thermos jug, and sometimes as the sweatbox, the boot is an ungainly creation weighing five and three-quarter pounds a pair, and setting the taxpayer back $18—one pound heavier and $10 more expensive than a pair of shoepacs. The old-issue rubber-shoed, leather-topped shoepac makes the feet sweat prodigiously. When the thermometer drops, the perspiration freezes and frostbite begins.

Insulation Minimizes Frostbite Risk

The Mickey Mouse is *all* rubber to the calf—an inner and outer sheath with a half inch of blanketing insulation between. The feet sweat, but the insulation keeps the perspiration from freezing. It's uncomfortable at times, but an occasional change of socks makes the boot almost trench-foot- and frostbite-proof—almost, because even the best equipment isn't enough.

"Few Americans know how to take care of themselves in cold weather," said Brigadier General L. Holmes Ginn, the Eighth Army Surgeon. "Most of us come from places where heat and shelter are taken for granted. We have to be taught."

To teach them, two-man teams from every unit down to company take a cold-weather course at division or corps level. There they are shown horror movies of trench foot, the four stages of frostbite (the light red "sunburn" stage, the darker red, the peeling and finally gangrene), and how to avoid or treat them. The teams then go back to their outfits and spread the word.

"We had only one case of frostbite by mid-November," Ginn said wryly. "The man didn't change his socks for four days."

Along with the new chemical hand warmers, the improved field-jacket liners and the pajama-type long underwear go a few old-fashioned cold-weather tips:

1. A man should change or dry his socks once a day, try to massage his feet with foot powder or have a buddy do it. Even with Mickey Mouse boots, the toes and feet should be kept active whenever possible.
2. Boots can be dried out with a hot rock or an inlaid piece of paper.
3. Socks can be dried by carrying them inside the underwear next to the skin.
4. A little exercise before turning in will help heat up the sleeping bag.
5. Wherever possible, bedding should be placed on something 30 inches off the ground, with as much insulation under the body as over it.
6. In emergencies, frostbitten hands or feet should be warmed inside another man's shirt, next to the skin, and never heated by anything above body temperature.

Because a wounded man is twice as liable to shock in cold weather, the Medical Corps has devised new ways of keeping him warm. Foremost is an oversized, down-filled evacuation bag big enough to accommodate splints and fitted with zippers permitting one part of the body to be exposed at a time. Chemical heat pads for litters is a World War II device, but new plastic "pods" for airborne stretchers cover wounded men flown out by helicopter. And aid men now carry plasma in flexible plastic bottles that won't freeze or crack.

PETER KALISCHER

Group of Seventh Regiment Marines face Korean weather in new knee-length parkas and eighteen-dollar, wool-insulated Mickey Mouse boots

Collier's for February 7, 1953

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WIDE WORLD

Two Marines sleep comfortably in snow-covered sleeping bags near Koto, Korea. Windproof, cotton-cased bags are stuffed with down

WIDE WORLD

Members of the best—and most expensively—winterized army in the world, a United Nations patrol plods through snow on Korean front

An army still travels on its stomach, and to warm the inner man winter rations are increased to 5,000 calories daily—800 more than in summer—and every effort is made to get a man to one hot meal a day.

A mechanized army, however, is more thirsty than hungry. Two thirds of the total military supplies shipped into Korea are petroleum products, and for winter they have to be of a special kind.

While a shivering soldier may not differentiate between 10 and 30 degrees below zero, his vehicles and weapons do. So private oil companies, in cooperation with the Defense Department, have produced a whole new line of wonder fuels and lubricants which are meeting their first true test of battle this winter.

Eighth Army now has large stocks of a new Diesel oil (freezing point, 65 degrees below zero) to heat bunker and tent stoves; an all-purpose gear oil and a grease that function efficiently "from the desert to the North Pole"; a thin recoil oil for every weapon from a .45 to an eight-inch howitzer; and an alcohol mix for arctic-type gasoline to keep water that seeps in from freezing. Someone even invented a cold-resistant plastic spout to pour fuel from one container to another.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Peterson, of Boston, chief of the Far East Command's petroleum division, QMC, is the main worrier over how the fuel is handled.

"We've got to educate the high brass as well as enlisted men on servicing gas in the winter," he said. "Until we got this low-pour Diesel oil, there was a rash of tent and mess-hall fires. When the old zero-pour Diesel froze up in the feeder can outside the tent, the men used gasoline. It was only a matter of time before the explosion."

A team of oil-company technicians made a hush-hush Korean inspection early this winter and concluded that most of the arctic-grade fuels and lubricants went far beyond the temperature requirements of the *present* battle line. But should we care to roll north again, this time the wheels won't lock.

What is the Army doing with the old-type winter outfits?

I found out from a man who could have used one two years ago. He was Pfc James W. Hayes, of Mount Vernon, Ill., serving his second tour in Korea. His first was driving an ammo truck for the 99th Field Artillery Battalion in temperatures that hit 36 below on one night. The battalion was overrun by the first Chinese surprise attack at Unsan in October, 1950, and Hayes made it back 30 miles in a field jacket and sweater. (He wasn't issued an overcoat until December nor a pair of shoepacs until March.) And where is Hayes now? Working in a warm, rear-area supply room, wallowing in mufflers, long underwear and old parkas. Only the front-line troops get the brand-new stuff, Hayes explained. Class B (support troops) and Class C (rear area) get heavy gear according to their jobs. Every item has a life expectancy of two years, and salvageable clothes go to prisoners of war.

"Sure could have used some of that Class C issue back in nineteen fifty," Hayes said.

Some of the biggest changes aren't found in the supply room but in the men's attitude toward living and fighting in the cold. From Army headquarters down, everybody is busting out with old and new ideas on how to lick the weather. Some of the foxhole improvisations have wound up as staff studies and been distributed back down to the men who invented them.

Yankee Ingenuity in Anti-Cold War

It takes most of a man's energy just to exist in cold weather, and all along the front the troops are doing strange and wonderful things to make that existence easier.

They are building bunker entrances with right-angle baffles to keep out the wind and a step lower to drain off the cold air. The bunkers are heated with 10-pound, made-in-Japan stoves that will burn wood, charcoal or Diesel. (Five thousand, at $10 apiece, were delivered in 45 days after pilot models proved a success.) Fancier bunkers have radiant heating to warm the floors (Korean style).

Outpost sentries, in the coldest weather, will wear as much as 22 pounds of clothing and an eight-pound armored vest. This outfit is considered a little too bulky, and sponge-rubber plastic undersuits—designed to replace long johns, wool shirt and sweater—are being tried out.

A piece of World War II equipment being worked to death is the slave kit—a boxlike hot-air blower towed in a trailer or carried in a truck. Hooked into any vehicle's ignition coil, it will thaw an iceberg in half an hour.

Grouzer teeth, another old item, are back in favor. They are solid, cast-iron triangles fitted into the center of a tank tread to keep it from skidding in the snow. Mountain roads, incidentally, are having their crowns bulldozed so that when anything does skid, it will slip toward the mountainside and not off the embankment.

With the coming of snow and sleet, the men froze barbed wire, rocks and posts into defensive barriers. A 3d Division company coated a forward slope with ice—called it the Skating Rink—and at last reports were waiting eagerly for the next Communist patrol to cross.

Sometimes the field manual asks a little too much—like the recommendation that the enemy be made to attack into a biting wind.

"Maybe the Navy can whistle up a wind to order," growled one major, "but we have to take 'em like they blow."

Artillerymen, however, have learned to fire according to the weather. They've found that fragmentation shells are less effective over snow than bare ground or ice. And the tankers have got used to parking on blocks of wood to keep their treads from freezing into the ground.

One Marine company commander is afraid the tendency to snug down can be fatal—and not from frostbite. "A man's reactions slow up in the cold," he said. "He gets a psychological feeling of lassitude—a kind of dopey hibernation, particularly in this bunker war. Cold weather is when we should send out *more* patrols."

One man who agrees with him is General Van Fleet. I asked Van Fleet how we stacked up against the Communists in winter warfare.

"The UN ground army," he said, "is so vastly superior in cold-weather gear and equipment, there's hardly a comparison. Only the UN army could function in all types of warfare throughout the winter."

Here he qualified himself. "I'm speaking, of course, of *offensive* warfare in which we have the decided advantage. Our advantage lies in all-weather certainty of evacuation and far superior clothing."

Van Fleet is more than a theorist on winter fighting. He beat the Communist guerrillas in Greece during the cold months when they were snowbound in the mountains. Conditions are different in Korea. "The war in Greece was against guerrillas—the war in Korea is orthodox," Van Fleet explained.

Van Fleet had recently ended three days of conferences with Eisenhower during the President-elect's Korea visit.

"I should like to point out," he said, carefully, "that winter is not an obstacle to modern fighting. During the American Civil War the fighting stopped during the winter and at sundown. During the first World War it slowed down during winter, but continued day and night at other times. In World War II, as well as in Korea today, war is waged day and night, winter and summer, and nothing stops it except a mission and the means.

"I do not believe," he said, "that we could be better prepared for cold-weather fighting than we are in Korea." ▲▲▲

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The woman under the blankets raised herself and said, "So you're back. What do you want now? There's nothing more to take. Leave us to die in our home place"

THE FINGER OF

By STUART CLOETE

THE prisoner roll call was at six in the evening. First there was the bugle call. Then the men collected on the red hard-baked parade ground. Not tidily, not fallen in, because the prisoners were Boers—farmers, free burghers—who had been captured as they fought for liberty.

Then came the young officer and the fat sergeant. To the officer, the prisoners were rebels, an undisciplined lot who couldn't even form fours. He was Authority. He stood by the sergeant, who called the roll. The sergeant was the Voice. The Voice did not speak till the officer said, "Call the roll, Sergeant." Then he began. There were no A's, so he began with B.

"Basson!" he shouted.

A tall slouched man said, *"Ja."*

The sergeant went on: "Beyers, Brink, De Jongh, Duminy . . ."

The men said, *"Ja, ja . . ."*

Once they had answered, they ceased to be there. Their bodies were there, but their attention —their minds and hearts—wandered. There was no need for more attention. They could go back to their dreams of their wives and children, of their homes and cattle, their dogs, the horses they had lost in the war.

Jan Moolman heard his name called. *"Ja,"* he said. In his mind he smiled. Tomorrow, when they called, he would not be there. His plans were made. Tomorrow, when the roll was called, Japie de Wet would answer in his place.

Moolman was a hunter by profession. He had never married and so was less unhappy than the others. He had not married because once he loved a girl—a little thing with blue eyes and blonde hair. Then she had a fever and in a week she was gone. After that, something died in his heart. But it was curious that, having suffered so much when he was young, he suffered less now than the others. God was just. If a man must suffer, He saw to it that he did not suffer too much, and never paid twice for the same thing.

Jan was a man of medium height, dark-haired and dark-eyed as are many Boers with French blood. His skin was leathery, creased with the wrinkles of exposure to the sun and glare of Africa. He moved quickly, softly, with a slight horseman's roll.

Stripped, he was a man of iron and whipcord, bound with brass. Though he was very quiet you

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GOD

The last hard core of Boer resistance lay fifty miles ahead. "You must go on," she said. "We can manage now." But could he, even though there was a price on his head?

felt that this stillness could explode into action at any moment.

He was a legend among his people. Sometimes it amused him. Any man could become a legend if he took enough risks and survived them. With Francina gone, he welcomed risks. They were the only thing that could take his mind off her, and if he was killed he would be with her. But he had told no one about her. Why should he? That had been in the beginning, twenty years ago.

And now that way of living, taking chances, had become a habit. He knew no other. Three things he loved—his country, hunting and horses. He hated nothing except the English, after they started burning the farms and taking the wives and children of the Boers into protective custody, as they called it. Unfortunately, being unused to confinement, many of them died in these camps, though they were cared for and well fed. They died the way a caged wild bird will die, of a broken heart—the way he himself might die if they sent him away from his land and over the sea.

He thought of a British officer—a lancer—who had accompanied the general who had inspected the camp yesterday. The lancer had put out his hand and said: "Will you shake hands, Moolman? We are both hunters. When this is over I should like to hunt with you in Africa."

Moolman had asked about him afterward and learned that he was a rich young man who had hunted all over the world except Africa. He was, in his way, a notable hunter with some record heads to his name. Jan did not give a damn for records; he hunted for money and for meat. But to get records a man must have some qualities. *Ja*, there were good men among the English. There must be. There were so many of them. And even this business of burning farms was understandable in a war that had dragged on so long. Every farm was a base where tired Boers could rest up and refit. *Ja*, that was war. And it brought much hatred in its train. But war was never good. Men should not hunt one another like wild beasts.

But they were fools, these English. No one knew it better than Jan Moolman because, among a nation of scouts, he was one of the best. He was so good that there had been a price put on his head. That made him laugh too—a price, a hundred pounds. *Ja*, he thought, I am worth as much as fifty young oxen. But it was time he went. Next week the prisoners were being moved to another camp farther to the rear, and from there they would be sent over the sea to Ceylon or St. Helena. He was one of the few *(Continued on page 62)*

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN DAWES

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WHERE ARE BASEBALL'S

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.300 HITTERS?

By TOM MEANY

There were only 17 of them in 1952. And it looks as though big hitters are going the way of the dodo

A .300 hitter in major-league baseball has become just about as rare as an American bison. If the decline continues at its present rate, he soon will be as extinct as the dodo.

Frank (Shag) Shaughnessy, president of the International League, puts it another way: "A big-league regular hitting .300 soon will be as rare as the pitcher who wins 20 games year in and year out."

Statistics bear him out. The number of .300 hitters among big-league regulars has shrunk steadily since before World War II. In 1939, for example, there were 39. Last year, there were only 17 in both leagues—eight in the American and nine in the National.

What's happened to .300 hitters?

Shaughnessy has his own theory. "Maybe the batters no longer work hard enough at their trade," he suggests. Some others among the men who know baseball best—big-league managers and players, scouts, farm directors and minor-league operators—take a similar view. But most have other—and varied—opinions.

Perhaps the most widely accepted view is that players are discarding old-fashioned batting science in a growing mania for home runs. In some ways, you can't blame them. Home runs usually pay off better at contract time than all-around batting ability.

The two highest-paid players in baseball last year were Ralph Kiner of the Pittsburgh Pirates, who got $90,000, and Stan Musial of the St. Louis Cardinals, who got $80,000. Musial has never hit below .300 in his 10 years as a major-leaguer, has led the National League in batting six times, including the last three years in a row, and has hit as high as .376. Kiner, on the other hand, has never batted higher than .313 and has dropped as low as .244, his 1952 average. But Ralph has led or tied for the lead in home runs every one of his seven seasons in the National League.

"The player who hits home runs drives a Cadillac," Kiner has been quoted as saying, "and the .300 hitter drives a jalopy."

Whether Kiner actually delivered this epigram is by now immaterial; it has been attributed to him so often that it has become a baseball legend. Rogers Hornsby, that outspoken and often-outgoing baseball figure who now manages the Cincinnati Reds, says the phrase is part of the baseball language.

"You should hear the fellows on our bench yammer when a player takes a wild swing and misses," Hornsby says. " 'Listenin' to Kiner again,' they yell. Or 'Wadda ya doin'? Tryin' for the Cadillac?' Sometimes they're pretty funny about it."

There is no question that while the number of home runs in the majors has increased—there are now 500 to 800 more a year than in the first post-war season of 1946—the batting averages have been fading. So it's easy for those so inclined—like Hornsby—to build a cause-and-effect case.

"That big, lunging swing for the home run is the bunk," says Hornsby, warming to his topic. "I never knew when I was going to hit a home run and I don't think Babe Ruth did either. It isn't the swing that gives you your power, it's the follow-through.

"The good hitter takes a level swing at every ball, hits the ball where it's pitched, and follows through with his body. That way he's meeting the ball solidly, hitting line drives. If he happens to hit the ball on the fat part of the bat, it can go for a home run. Some players today actually uppercut the ball in an effort to loft it into the seats. Sure, they get some home runs, but what about the times they pop up? The good batter concentrates on meeting the ball. If he hits a home run, that's all to the good. But it shouldn't be his primary objective."

Hornsby began the 1952 season as the manager who was to have led the St. Louis Browns out of the American League cellar. He finished it in the National League as the miracle manager of Cincinnati: during his regime, the Reds for the first time in years won more games than they lost. Consequently he is in an excellent position to pass judgment on the hitters in both major leagues.

Top Hitters Didn't Aim for Fences

"Who led the two leagues in hitting?" demands Hornsby. "Ferris Fain, of the Philadelphia Athletics, and Musial. And both of them hit the ball where it was pitched. You didn't see them breaking their backs trying to knock it out of the park."

Musial himself agrees that baseball is in what he calls a home-run cycle. But he says there are other reasons for the paucity of .300 hitting regulars. "Sure it's always hard to get a piece of the ball when you're trying for the long one," Stan admits. "But the pitching is much better than it used to be—almost as good as it was when I left to go into the service in 1942.

"Even veteran pitchers are getting better—guys who are in their thirties, like Maglie and Jansen of the Giants, Raffensberger of the Reds and Drews of the Phillies. And it seems as though every young prospect who comes into the league is a good pitcher. Look at Black of the Dodgers and Wilhelm of the Giants last season. Every club has a couple of good pitchers to throw at you."

Kiner, the phrasemaker and home-run clouter, also blames the dip in batting averages on improved pitching—plus better fielding. "I would say the fielders play the batters better," says Ralph. "They make more use of the percentage, playing the hitter where he hits the ball most of the time. And the shifts clubs use against batters who hit to one field certainly cuts down the averages.

"I have another theory that I think has a lot to do with the lower averages," Ralph continued. "The pitchers don't give you a good ball to hit, even when they're behind three-and-one or three-and-none. They still come in with their best pitch and they don't care if they walk you, so long as you don't hit the long ball. I think that's why there are more bases on balls—not because the pitchers haven't got control, but because they don't lay the ball in there any more when they get behind.

"That's why I no longer feel I have the pitcher in the hole when the count is in my favor," Ralph concluded. "And that's the way we pitch to the big hitters on the other clubs."

Brooklyn Home-Run King's Theory

Gil Hodges, Brooklyn's home-run king and the last major-leaguer to hit four home runs in a single game, has never batted even as high as .290. But he holds the record for homers by a Dodger in a single season—40 in 1951.

"I wish I really knew what's happened to the .300 hitter," grins Gil, "but I never hit .300 in my life, even in the minors. Naturally you swing harder when you try for home runs—that's the style now. I do think that pitching is getting better and that fielding has improved tremendously, even in the short time I've been in the majors. Tighter defensive play naturally cuts a hitter's average."

Yogi Berra, whose 30 home runs in 1952 established a new high for homers by a Yankee catcher, denies his batting average suffered because he concentrated on home runs. "Sure, my average dropped about 20 points," says Yogi, "but I hit three more home runs than I did in 1951. I'm pulling for the fences, like everybody else who wants to get in the upper brackets, but I don't think that affected my average. It was my finger injury in the spring, which caused me to miss about three weeks of practice."

Bill Veeck, owner of the Browns and the man who hired and fired Hornsby last year, says the mystery of the disappearing .300 hitter can be solved in two words: the slider.

"The slider," chortles Sport-shirt Bill triumphantly, "may be only a fast ball with a wrinkle but it gives the pitcher an extra pitch. It means that a batter who guesses with the pitcher now has two chances of being wrong instead of only one. A batter once had to look for only the fast ball or the curve, which gave him a .500 chance of guessing right. Now the odds are down to .333."

Frank (Lefty) O'Doul, former big-leaguer and a successful manager on the Pacific Coast for many years, disagrees. O'Doul, considered one of the keenest students of batting in the game's history, is tied with another scientific hitter, Bill Terry, for the most number of base hits ever made in a National League season—254. He blames the present scarcity of .300 hitters on a lack of ingenuity among batters, rather than any increased effectiveness by pitchers.

"The slider is nothing but a nickel curve," snorts

The men who know baseball best—big-league players and managers, scouts, farm bosses and minor-league operators—say these are some of the reasons why .300 hitters are a vanishing breed. But home-run sluggers are increasing—and so are their salary checks

DRAWING BY WILLARD MULLIN

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WIDE WORLD

Yankee slugger Yogi Berra says his batting average dropped 20 points in 1952 because he hurt his finger during spring practice

UNITED PRESS

Batting champions of 1952: Stan Musial of the National League (left) and Ferris Fain of the American League (right). Musial says better pitching is gradually reducing the number of .300 hitters. Fain believes night games also are cutting down the averages

Lefty. "We used to call it a 'sailer.' It breaks only horizontally, whereas the real curve ball breaks both horizontally and vertically. What would these guys who holler about sliders have to say if they had to hit against Carl Hubbell's screwball? Or Burleigh Grimes's spitball? They don't know how well off they are.

"The main fault is with the batters. They won't experiment. They don't look for holes in the infield to hit the ball through. They don't try the hit-and-run to pull the fielders out of position. They don't try to hit behind the runner. Ferris Fain, who played for me at San Francisco, is an exception. He'll slap at a ball in an effort to push it through a gap for a base hit. And he's led the American League for the last two years."

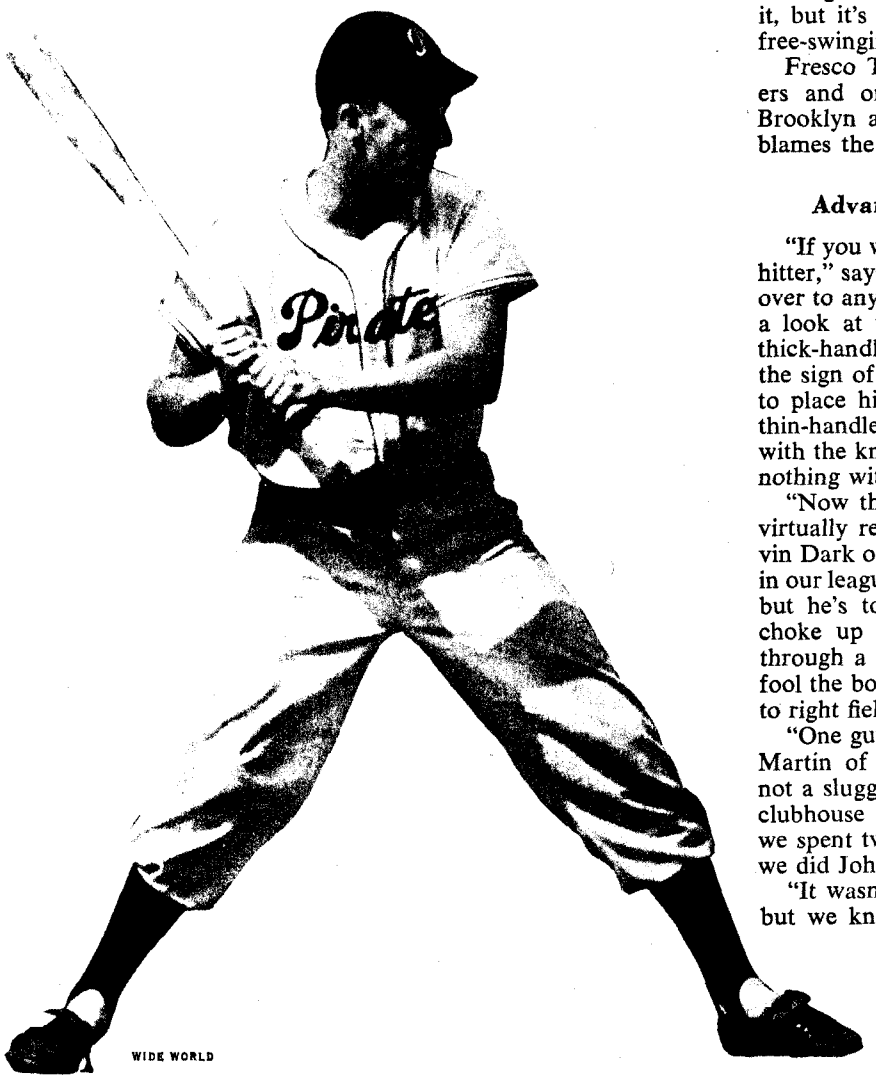
One of O'Doul's most successful pupils, Dom DiMaggio of the Red Sox, thinks his old boss may underrate the effectiveness of the slider. "When Ted Williams went into service shortly after the season opened," Dom recalls, "I told some of the fellows on our club that with Ted and my brother Joe gone, there wouldn't be ten regulars in the American League who would hit .300. And the slider is the big reason.

"The slider has now become standard equipment with nearly every pitcher. They all have it in their repertoire and it makes their fast ball and their curve just that much more effective. It's faster than a curve and not as fast as a fast ball, but it has spin on it.

"That slight deviation is the difference between hitting the ball solidly and popping it into the air or beating it into the ground. A slap-hitter can meet it, but it's a tough pitch to pull and it's hard on free-swinging hitters."

Fresco Thompson, vice-president of the Dodgers and onetime teammate of O'Doul both in Brooklyn and Philadelphia, sides with Lefty and blames the batters themselves.

Ralph Kiner batted only .244 in 1952, but he was highest-paid player of the season. The reason: he hit home runs



WIDE WORLD

Advantages of a Thick-Handled Bat

"If you want to know what's become of the .300 hitter," says Thompson, "all you have to do is walk over to any bat rack in the major leagues and take a look at the lumber. You don't see any more thick-handled bats. And the thick-handled bat was the sign of the scientific hitter, the guy who liked to place his hits. Most of the batters now have thin-handled bats, which they hold right at the end with the knob of the bat in their palms. It's all or nothing with them. And too often, it's nothing.

"Now that Eddie Stanky of the Cardinals has virtually retired to concentrate on managing, Alvin Dark of the Giants is the only bat-manipulator in our league. He hasn't got the power of a Musial, but he's tough with men on base because he'll choke up on the bat and try to push the ball through a hole. Pee Wee Reese of our club will fool the boys once in a while by punching the ball to right field.

"One guy who is smart around the plate is Billy Martin of the Yankees. Like Phil Rizzuto, he's not a slugger, but they both can be tough. In our clubhouse meeting before the last World Series we spent twice as much time discussing Martin as we did Johnny Mize.

"It wasn't that we didn't respect Mize's punch, but we knew Johnny had a definite weakness, a spot in which he could be pitched to. With Martin it was different. Our scouting reports on Billy showed that sometimes he hit outside pitches, sometimes low ones, sometimes inside and sometimes high. He didn't bat for any set style the way Mize did."

Casey Stengel, Yankee manager now aiming for his fifth straight world's championship, agrees that Martin is "a clever kid, a cutie-pie up at that dish."

"As Fresco says," explains Casey, "you can't dope out any direct formula for pitching to Billy because he changes up on you at the plate, too. He thinks with the pitcher. It strikes me, however, that if the Dodgers knew that Mize had such a definite weakness, they should have figured out some way to keep him from hitting those three home runs and batting .400 against them in the World Series."

Roy Campanella, the great Dodger catcher, has still another explanation for his own batting slump last season. His average dipped from .325 in 1951 to .269 and his home runs dropped off from 33 to 22.

"It was the hottest summer I ever experienced and I've played a lot of baseball in Latin America," Roy says. "The heat just got the batters down and made it a pitchers' year. Even though there weren't many pitchers who won 20 games, there were a lot of guys who won from a dozen upward—guys who didn't win 10 in previous seasons."

A more dismal view of the decline of the .300 hitter is taken by Wilfred (Rosy) Ryan, former big-league pitcher and now successful operator of the Giants' American Association farm at Minneapolis. He believes the source of talent is drying up.

"Fewer and fewer good young ballplayers have shown up since 1940," says Ryan. "A lot of kids who would be learning their trade in the minors have been in military service. I know it is far more important for the country's welfare to have soldiers than ballplayers, but we have been losing our players right at the source. It wasn't only the draft; there were economic reasons, too. A kid who couldn't serve in the Army could make as much money in a week in a defense plant as he could in a month in the minors.

"This loss of talent at the source took the pressure off those who were in baseball, particularly in the majors. The player no longer had to fight for his job because some younger and hungrier kid was on his heels. This relaxation was especially true of most of the bonus kids, who had their payments spread out over a three-year period. The money in the bank meant the kid had enough dough to take it easy, and the major-league club had too great an investment in him to drop him."

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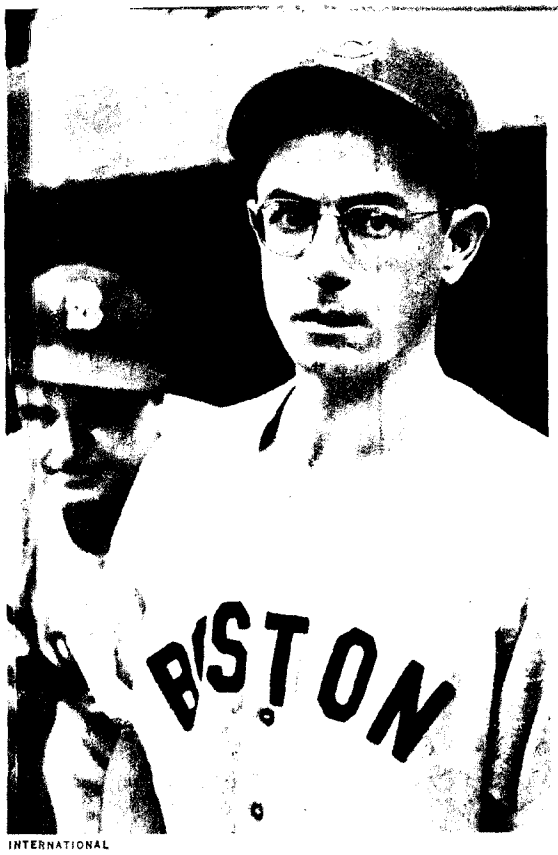

INTERNATIONAL

Dom DiMaggio, Red Sox slugger and brother of famed Joe, says slider is the principal reason why batting averages are on decline

WIDE WORLD

Roy Campanella, Dodger catcher, believes extreme heat was responsible for the dip in his batting average during '52 season

UNITED PRESS

Bobby Shantz, who won 24 games in 1952, was surprised by drop in the averages. He thought batters were as good as ever

Ryan, the first National League pitcher ever to hit a home run in a World Series (1924), recalled his own days with the Giants under John McGraw.

"In my day," he says, "the custom in batting practice was to serve the hitter three fast ones and two curves. Now if you throw a batter a curve in batting practice, he'll throw down his bat and indignantly accuse you of trying to show him up. The hitter of today can't hit breaking stuff—curves, sliders, knucklers—because he won't practice against it."

Not Eager to Correct Their Faults

If old-time batters had a weakness, Ryan continued, they would work on it until either they had eliminated it or had devised a defense against it. "Now the players are too well-satisfied with themselves to concentrate on removing flaws from their batting style," he says. "Their attitude is, 'They need me. My job is safe.' And the worst of it is, they're right most of the time. We just haven't got the talent to replace them."

Ferris Fain, the American League batting champion, believes the increasing number of night games also has served to cut down batting averages. "Night ball makes it tough on the hitters," says the Athletics' star batsman. "There isn't any question about that. And those twi-night double-headers that so many clubs have fallen into the habit of playing now are even worse. No matter how good the lights are, I don't think you can follow the ball as well as you can in daylight."

Steve O'Neill, who did such a tremendous resuscitation job with the Philadelphia Phillies when he took them over in mid-fifty-two, also blames night baseball.

"I don't mean that the lights have too serious an effect on the players' eyes," Steve explains. "It does shorten their careers, but the lights are improving all the time and the net effect is probably no worse than going to the movies or looking at television every night. But the night games—and there are more and more of them every season—cut into the time a player gets in batting practice. The player not only doesn't get as much batting practice as he should, but he doesn't get it at the right time. To start the games at eight or eight thirty, the visiting player has to take his batting practice during twilight."

O'Neill says that when he was with Tris Speaker's championship Cleveland Indians in 1920, the squad used to turn out for batting practice at 10:00 A.M. while at home. And games then didn't start until three or three thirty, which meant that the players practiced before and after lunch. Steve was quick to admit, however, that batting practice wouldn't help a player much if he used it merely as a test of strength instead of an opportunity to correct his faults.

"I used to shudder at what I saw when I was with the Red Sox," says O'Neill. "I'd watch my players go up to the plate one after the other and pull for that short fence at Fenway Park. That was in practice, mind you, when they were supposed to be trying to improve themselves. All they wanted was to hear the customers oohing and ahing over the long drives they belted, most of which went foul because they were trying to pull every pitch. We'd use up more baseballs in one day's batting practice at Fenway than we'd use in an entire World Series when I was playing."

O'Neill insists his ace slugger at Boston, Ted Williams, was an exception, however. "Ted didn't bunt the ball, or drag or try to hit to the opposite field," says Steve. "Instead he concentrated on his hitting. He would ask me to have left-handers pitch against him when he wasn't going well against southpaws, and there wouldn't be all this business of feeding him only fast balls, either. Williams would insist that the catcher signal for every pitch, not let him know in advance what was coming, and behave just as though it were a regular game."

Bobby Shantz, who won 24 games for the Athletics and was named the most valuable player in the American League, maintains that he hasn't noticed any marked decline in the .300 hitters. He feels there are just as many difficulties for the pitchers as ever. He did make an interesting observation regarding the free-swinger and the bat-manipulator, however.

"You can change up on the swingers," says the tiny southpaw. "Throw them a slow one and it knocks off their timing. But you can't slow up on a guy like Bobby Avila, for example. He can shorten up his grip and punch the ball through the infield."

The most unusual explanation for the dearth of .300 hitters comes from Lefty Gomez, the gay *caballero* who pitched so brilliantly for the Yankees in the thirties and is now a salesman for a sporting-goods firm.

"I don't see what all the fuss is about," says Lefty. "I can tell you what happened to the .300 hitters, at least in the American League. In 1952, there were eight regulars who batted .300 in the league. Back in 1937, when I was pitching, there were 27 regulars who hit over .300. They just disappeared when I stopped pitching."

The figures are correct, but the modest Mr. Gomez failed to mention that in 1937 he won 21 games despite the greater number of .300 hitters then. ▲▲▲

UNITED PRESS

Gil Hodges, Brooklyn home-run champ, blames better pitching and fielding for the decline in big-league batting averages

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My Schoolmate Geminder–

RISE AND FALL OF A

By JOSEPH WECHSBERG

Two boys grew up in the same Czech town. One grew from a moody child to a top Red leader to a convicted Red traitor. The other tells, now, of what happened in the years between

The author, a noted free-lance journalist, writes as a lifelong acquaintance of the executed Communist leader, Bedrich Geminder. Covering the European scene over the last eight years, he was familiar with events leading up to the recent Czechoslovak purge. Wechsberg first arrived in the United States in 1938, is now a citizen and, when he is not reporting from abroad, lives in Hollywood

PRAGUE, Nov. 20, 1952—Fourteen former top leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist party went on trial today in the greatest Red purge since the Moscow trials of 1936. Second among those indicted was Bedrich Geminder, long-time mystery man of the Czech Communist party, and often regarded as the behind-the-scenes ruler. He was accused of high treason, espionage, sabotage, military treason, Trotskyism, Titoism, Zionism, Jewish bourgeois nationalism.

I have known Bedrich Geminder since the first World War when we were boys in my home town of Moravská Ostrava, in Czechoslovakia. The city then wasn't the large, coal-mining and industrial center it is today; people knew one another as in any middle-sized town. Everybody knew the Geminder boys. Sigi, the younger one, shared my love for music—I played the violin—and often accompanied me on the piano. Fritz, as he was called then (Bedrich is Czech for Frederick), was a soccer player. Perhaps this difference in interests has colored my relationship to the brothers; I used to play music *with* Sigi, but on the field I would often play soccer *against* Fritz.

Twice a week, after supper, I would gather my fiddle and a folding stand and walk over to the apartment, near Nadrazni Trida, where the Geminders lived. The boys' mother had died some years back and their place curiously lacked a warm, homely touch. There were Persian rugs, ornate curtains, embroidered tablecloths; on the mahogany buffet stood china figurines, typical paraphernalia of local middle-class elegance; but there were no flowers in the vases and always dust covers on the armchairs. The cooking and cleaning were done by a gruff, elderly housekeeper.

The Geminders were reasonably well off. Father Geminder, a small, bald-headed, kindly man, owned a wholesale grocery business. He would spend his evenings at the Café Royal playing whist with other prosperous businessmen, had a subscription seat at the local theater, and every summer went for a month to Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) to take the cure. He was proud of his boys and hoped they would go far.

The brothers were quite different. Sigi was blond, tall and friendly, wearing neat clothes and horn-rimmed glasses; everybody liked him. Fritz, the older one—he was born on November 19, 1901—was dark, stooped, an introvert. His uncombed hair always fell into his forehead which gave him the air of a thinker. He professed disdain for the amenities of social life; his pants were always unpressed. Even in subzero weather he would walk bareheaded through the streets, his body slightly hunched forward, hands in his pockets, a book under his elbow. He rarely bothered to acknowledge other people's greetings. Some boys said he was a bore; others thought he was an interesting eccentric. No one in our group really liked him. He had a supercilious air that made us feel he knew more than the rest of us; and he probably did.

In the crammed Geminder living room, I would put up my folding stand next to the Bechstein piano, and Sigi and I would launch into the sonatas by Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms. Around ten o'clock, the door would be opened and Fritz would come in. He would slump down in a chair, still in his topcoat. Sigi secretly admired his older brother and wanted to impress him. He would slip me the Finale from Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata, which we considered our *pièce de résistance.*

For a while, Fritz would listen in gloomy silence. Then he would get up, in the middle of the piece, and go to his room. We stopped playing. Sigi looked crestfallen. "He didn't like it," I would say. "What's he doing in there?"

"Reading," Sigi said. "He's always reading. Father is angry because the light bill goes up. He reads everything: War and Peace, Dostoevski, Kafka, Rilke, Sigmund Freud, Marx."

"Does he understand those books?" I asked, somewhat awed. I was reading Goethe's Faust (only the first part), and A Midsummer Night's Dream.

"Fritz understands *everything,*" Sigi would say, wistfully. Many of my schoolmates agreed with him. Fritz Geminder was a few years older than the rest of us, but owing to a peculiar school setup and the shortage of space, there were courses in French, Czech, drawing and advanced German literature which we took together. The teachers disliked Fritz but had to give him good marks. He liked to start arguments and would debate his point with brilliant dialectics that delighted us and confused the pompous, unpopular teachers. On such occasions, we almost came to like him.

Preferred Scout Work to Dancing

Many of us spent our evenings at Mr. Exner's Dancing School, learning the shimmy and suave manners, and flirting with the pretty girls from the local *Lyceum,* but Fritz had no time for fun. He was deeply interested in the *Blau-Weiss* (Blue-White), a Zionist Boy Scout group devoted to hiking and the study of Jewish history and Zionism. He was greatly admired by the younger boys and was elected *Oberführer* (main leader), a position carrying considerable prestige in our circles. He lectured on Socialism and on the writings of T. G. Masaryk, the first President of Czechoslovakia. Everybody agreed that he was going to go far.

PRAGUE, Nov. 23, 1952—Bedrich Geminder, accused in court of plotting to overthrow the regime of President Gottwald, and to deliver the country to "Western capitalism," today admitted his early membership in the Blau-Weiss as proof of his "cosmopolitan Zionistic heritage and of his bondage with the West."

One night, while Sigi and I were playing sonatas, Father Geminder came home. He listened for a while and sighed. "I wish Fritz were like the two of you," he said. He went into Fritz's room and came back with a few books. Among them were, I remember, some books by Lenin and by Rosa Luxemburg, the German Communist leader.

"What kind of reading is that?" the old man said. "When I was his age, I used to go with girls and have fun. That boy has never any fun."

"Fritz is serious, Father," Sigi would say. "He's worried about the world."

"Too much for his own good," said the old man. As it turned out, it was a prophetic statement.

Romance with a Banker's Daughter

A few months later, Fritz Geminder did go with a girl. Edith, the daughter of a local bank manager, was a vivacious, pretty brunette, a fine skier and ice skater. For a while, Fritz would be seen with her everywhere, at the confectionery, the Kosmos Cinema, on the *"corso."* It gave me a jolt to see Fritz carry the girl's skates when he accompanied her to the ice rink. I'd done it many times but you just didn't expect Fritz Geminder, the serious thinker, to carry a girl's skates. He didn't skate. He would stand there, watching her, and he would blush when Edith smiled at him.

And then, everything was over, as suddenly as it had started, and Edith fell in love with Paul, the outside-left on our first-string soccer team, and an accomplished shimmy dancer. Fritz dropped out and went back to his books, reading, brooding, looking more hunched than ever. When I came back from a vacation, Sigi told me that Fritz had gone to Berlin to continue his studies.

During the next few years, I saw Fritz occasionally in Prague, where I studied at the university and graduated from law school. He was always surrounded by groups of younger boys, quite a few of them coming from wealthy families, with unkempt hair and revolutionary leanings. Most of us studied French and English, but Fritz Geminder and his crowd studied Russian so they could read the writings of Lenin in the original. He had become a member of the Czechoslovak Communist party back in 1921, one of its earliest members, read only *Rude Pravo,* the party paper, and despised the "bourgeois" *Prager Tageblatt,* for which I wrote and which his father and brother read daily. It was useless to get into political arguments with him; he was already trained to win every argument, by sophistry, distortion and dialectics. Once, in exasperation, I asked him why he, a non-proletarian, was a Communist.

"Because I believe in the Communist philosophy," he said.

In 1933 he went to Moscow. He had been selected to study at the Lenin School, where outstanding members of the Communist International were being trained. When I went back to Ostrava to visit my mother, I would still play music with Sigi, who was doing all right as a dentist, but we never talked about Fritz any more. Fritz had become something of a black sheep.

My wife and I came to the United States late in

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COMMUNIST LEADER

1938. During the second World War, I served in the American Army. I returned to Prague two days after V Day, the first American soldier to get there during the revolution. The people of Prague had risen against the German oppressors. For a few days it was touch and go, until the liberators—Marshal Ivan S. Konev's army—appeared in Prague. History in postwar Europe might have been rewritten, if Prague had been liberated by the United States Third Army which was only 40 miles away, near Pilsen, but had orders to stay there.

There was much elation in Prague. The war was won and we were all brothers, happily mixing ideologies, vodka and whisky. Everywhere, I saw pictures of Roosevelt, Stalin, Churchill and Benes.

Two years later, when I returned to Prague, the city seemed changed. In the national election of 1946, the Communists had polled 38 per cent of the popular vote, emerging as the strongest party and winning 114 out of 300 seats in the Parliament. Benes was still President and Jan Masaryk his Foreign Minister, but most pictures I saw were of Joseph Stalin and Klement Gottwald, the new Prime Minister. Many large enterprises were being nationalized. There was no doubt which way things were going.

The former stock exchange had been transformed into Parliament, and the former Parliament at the Rudolfinum was now used as a concert hall. The buildings of what had once been the large banks had been taken over as headquarters by the big political parties. The largest building, a modernistic structure of the Czech Eskompte Bank, on Prikopy, was now headquarters of the Communist party; almost overnight the citadel of capitalism had become the citadel of Communism. There were red banners, pictures of Soviet leaders, a large book store with Communist literature, and large Tatra automobiles, symbols of power, since they were allotted only to top leaders.

Return of a Czech Brigade Veteran

A few days later I met Paul, the former outside-left. He had fought in a Czech brigade attached to the British Middle East Army and had returned a few months ago. Like many other returnees, he had trouble getting his property back from the National Council. "I fought with the Western armies, which is the wrong side nowadays," he said bitterly. "It would be a different story, if I'd been with the Red Army, like Fritz Geminder."

"Is he back in Prague?"

Paul gave me a where-have-you-been look. "He's been here since '46. His office is next to that of Rudolf Slansky, the secretary-general of the Communist party. Geminder is invisible. And terribly powerful."

"Did you ask him for help?" I said.

Paul looked at me, with faint irony. I felt awkward. I suddenly realized that I didn't understand the people here any more.

"Fritz Geminder won't remember me," Paul said. "I wonder whether he still remembers his father and his brother. Sigi and his wife managed to get out in time. Sigi is now a dentist in Santiago de Chile." Paul looked over his shoulder to make sure we were not overheard and said, in a whisper, "They say that Gottwald takes orders from Fritz Geminder. You know how they call him at party headquarters? The Gray Eminence."

I was dumfounded. You just didn't think of one of the Geminder boys as the country's Gray Eminence. This was a job for a tough, cold-blooded man, and somehow I'd always thought of Fritz as an ineffective dreamer. But gradually the story began to emerge—a preposterous story.

After graduating from Lenin School in Moscow, Geminder had been transferred to the Communist International (Comintern), the most important instrument of world-wide Communist expansion. During the second World War, when the Comintern was formally dissolved to appease the Western Allies, its machinery was incorporated in the International Section of the Secretariat of the All-Union Communist (Bolshevik) party. While working for the Comintern, Geminder used the pseudonym "Bedrich Vltavsky." During the Battle of Stalingrad, he is said to have distinguished himself as leader of a parachutist youth brigade and was decorated for bravery. In Moscow, he attracted the attention of Georgi Malenkov, now generally considered Stalin's successor, and closer to the boss than any other Politburo members. Malenkov, a master organizer, knew a talented fellow when he saw one. Geminder was secretly trained to become the Kremlin's watchdog in Prague.

His position in the Czechoslovak Communist party was anomalous and it bewildered old party regulars. He was a member of neither the party's Central Committee nor of the elected Party Presidium, but he took part in the top-secret meetings of both the Central Committee and the Presidium, and during the party's general sessions sat on the platform among the mighty ones.

"Of all the party leaders," an editor of *Rude Pravo*, the official newspaper of the Czechoslovak Communist party told me, "only Geminder and Gottwald have direct access to the Kremlin. Gottwald is the front man. But Geminder runs the show. We have orders not to print his picture in our paper."

When the nine-nation Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) was revived in 1947, Geminder became its master architect and Czechoslovakia's top delegate. (Other delegates were Rudolf Slansky, Ladislav Kopriva, St. Bastovansky.) Geminder was editor in chief of the Cominform Journal, "For a Lasting Peace—For the People's Democracy," printed in Bucharest.

A Plea for the Overthrow of Tito

On November 29, 1949, he coauthored the Cominform's call for the overthrow of Tito and urged non-Communists to get behind the Communist "peace offensive," regardless of their political and religious affiliations. And although Geminder was arrested as early as September, 1951, his name disappeared from the Cominform Weekly only in January, 1952.

The Kremlin's choice of Geminder was typically realistic. Gottwald had always been a Czech first and a Communist second; an ex-carpenter and proletarian he was, and still is, popular with the masses, and has the potential makings of a Tito.

Geminder, on the other hand, was Jewish,

In 1948, Wechsberg visited Geminder, then a powerful figure in Prague, to ask a favor for a friend. "The party," Geminder said, "can't be bothered with problems of the individual"

DRAWING BY ARTHUR SHILSTONE

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What was Geminder's crime? Was he a traitor? A saboteur? Or just a scapegoat?

German-educated, an alien, of middle-class background, widely hated inside and outside the party. Anti-Semitism, not much of a problem during the Masaryk and Benes regimes, had been successfully fomented during the Nazi occupation and has been lingering on in Czechoslovakia ever since. Unlike Gottwald, the national, Czech-trained Communist, Geminder was the typical Moscow-trained internationalist, a man without homeland, allegiance, loyalties.

His wife, Irene Falcone, was the former secretary of Dolores Ibarruri, "La Pasionaria," Spain's most famous Communist fighter. The Geminders lived at Petidomi No. 4, in the pleasant upper-middle-class district of Praha-Bubenec.

Geminder at the Height of His Power

Officially, Geminder was "chief of the International Section of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist party." Actually, he made sure that the policies of the Czechoslovak Communist party were tied in with Moscow's interests; he bossed foreign policy, supervised all appointments in the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the Ministry for Foreign Trade, watched Rudolf Slansky, who ran the vast party machinery. At one time, 2,500,000 of Czechoslovakia's 12,500,000 inhabitants, one out of every five, were members of the Communist party. Geminder and Slansky, originally close friends, later on became hostile to each other. And Gottwald was afraid of Geminder, who read the president's courier correspondence with all foreign countries.

PRAGUE, Nov. 22d—Asked by the chairman of the Prague State Court, Geminder said, "I have never in my life been a true Communist."

I went to see Geminder one morning early in 1948, shortly before the Communist *Putsch* in Czechoslovakia. Paul, still trying to get his property back, had asked me to intervene on his behalf. Geminder hadn't answered his letters.

I have since been in similar party headquarters, in Budapest, Warsaw, East Berlin, Leipzig, but that morning at Communist headquarters on Prikopy was a new and frightening experience for me. The posters on the wall, the dreary corridors, the broken window panes, the sullen men wearing two-day beards and unpressed suits who were watching me suspiciously. (If you shaved every day and wore pressed clothes, you might be called a reactionary.) I was taken into a large, bare waiting room on the second floor. People were sitting in tense silence. After a while, a man took me to a smaller waiting room, which was furnished with rugs and comfortable chairs.

"*Soudruh* (Comrade) Geminder will see you in a moment," he said.

Then I knew the stories about Geminder must be true. Among the half-dozen people waiting to see Comrade Geminder were Alexej Cepicka, then Minister of Justice and the son-in-law of President Gottwald and today Defense Minister and perhaps the most powerful man in Czechoslovakia; and Antonin Zapotocky, head of URO, the central trade-union organization, and today Prime Minister.

Geminder worked in a large, comfortable office. I remember many books, three telephones, pictures of Stalin and Gottwald. He greeted me, unsmiling, speaking Czech. (No one in Prague dared speak German in those days; German had been the language of the oppressors.)

He wore a dark shirt, no tie and no party badge in his lapel; he didn't have to. His hair still fell into his forehead, but he wasn't hunched forward any more.

Our talk was short and chilling. He asked me where I'd been during the war, and when I said, "In the American Army," he nodded, sardonically, as if this was just what he'd expected. He skillfully parried my questions. Yes, he'd been "away" for many years. Now he was doing a job, "like everybody else, like the miners and workers and peasants in our country."

I asked him whether he had gone back to our home town.

"I go there frequently," he said. "We're going to make Ostrava the Czechoslovak Magnitogorsk, a miners' and workers' paradise, the industrial heart of our country."

I said, "I met Edith last year. She's married, lives in Australia, and has two kids."

He looked blank. "Edith?"

"But surely you remember the pretty daughter of the bank manager who—"

"You must be mistaken." His voice was cold and razor sharp. "I don't remember."

I'm sure he didn't. Paul had been right: Geminder had forgotten his family, his bourgeois past, his ties with a world which was no longer his world. Memories and sentiments were useless ballast, to be tossed overboard.

I asked him to consider Paul's restitution case. After all, Paul had done his share for the liberation of Czechoslovakia.

He said, in an impersonal voice, as though he were addressing a meeting, "The party can't be bothered with problems of the individual. The individual steps aside when the interest of the collective is concerned. In the end, there is justice for everybody."

"But—"

"I don't expect you to agree with me," he said. For a moment I saw the abyss in his eyes. The thought crossed my mind that it was utterly hopeless to ask this man for anything. Then the phone rang. I left and was escorted out of the building.

In June, 1950, General Heliodor Pika, former Deputy Chief of Staff of the Czechoslovak army, was executed in Prague's Pankrac Prison for "high treason." Gottwald wanted to commute the sentence but Geminder ruled that Pika must die.

The First Indications of Downfall

Fourteen months later, a speaker at the Czechoslovak Youth Organization conference in Prague referred to Geminder as a "traitor." It was the first news of his downfall. On September 7, 1951, it was reported that Rudolf Slansky had been removed as the Communist party's secretary-general, in a "party shake-up." Because of insufficient coal production in the Ostrava region, Czechoslovakia had failed to deliver its quotas of machinery and electrical goods to the Soviet Union. Scapegoats were needed.

PRAGUE, Aug. 19th—Bedrich Geminder, once considered the Kremlin's chief spokesman in Prague, was today denounced as a leader in a plot against the Gottwald regime. Geminder, who disappeared last September, was accused of aiding Rudolf Slansky.

During the trial, the Prague radio every evening broadcast a commentary, interspersed with playbacks of tape recordings from the courtroom, where no Western observer or correspondent was admitted. And thus in Vienna, 125 miles away, you could hear the voice of sixteen-year-old Thomas Frejka demanding the death sentence for his father, the author of Czechoslovakia's five-year plan. You could hear of a letter written by the wife of one of the accused, ex-Deputy Foreign Minister Arthur London, asking the court, on behalf of her and her children, for a "just verdict" against her husband. And you could hear, for the last time, the monotonous voice of Bedrich Geminder, a dead voice already, making abject confessions and asking for "severe" punishment. When he was asked by the chairman of the court whether he wanted to appeal the death sentence, he renounced his right to appeal.

Why the big show trial? To give Gottwald in Prague, Matyas Rakosi in Budapest, Jakub Berman in Warsaw, Ana Pauker in Bucharest, Gerhardt Eisler in East Berlin and other satellite Communists a foretaste of what might be in store for them? To win friends among the Arabs and influence the Hitler-conditioned inhabitants of Soviet Germany? To punish a few scapegoats? Maybe the world will know one day, and maybe it never will, as in the case of the Moscow trials.

PRAGUE, Dec. 3d—The Prague radio announced at noon that 11 former Communist leaders, sentenced to die on the gallows after a seven-day trial by the state court, were executed a few hours earlier. The place of the execution was not announced. It was generally assumed that the men were hanged inside the Pankrac Prison. Among them was Bedrich Geminder, once the most powerful man in his country. ▲▲▲

Collier's for February 7, 1953

In one of the rare pictures taken of Geminder (second from left), he attended a May, 1947, meeting in office of Klement Gottwald (far left), then Czech premier, and other party leaders

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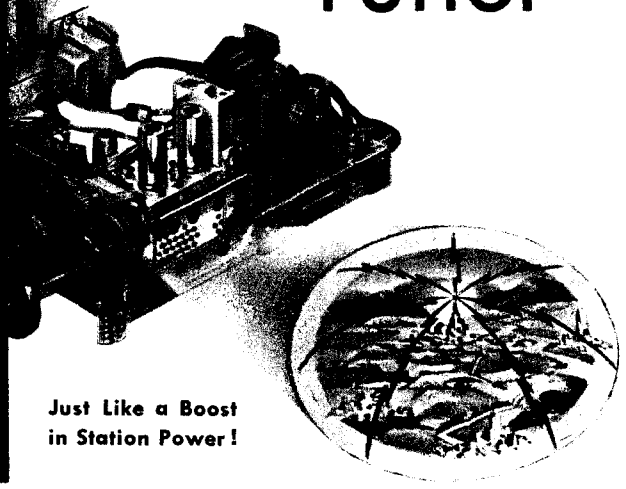

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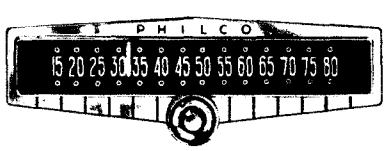

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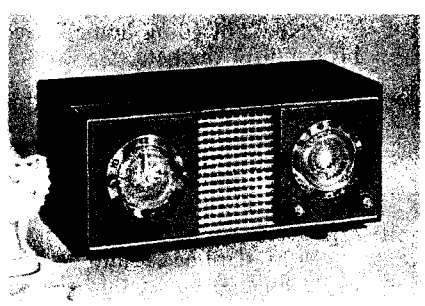

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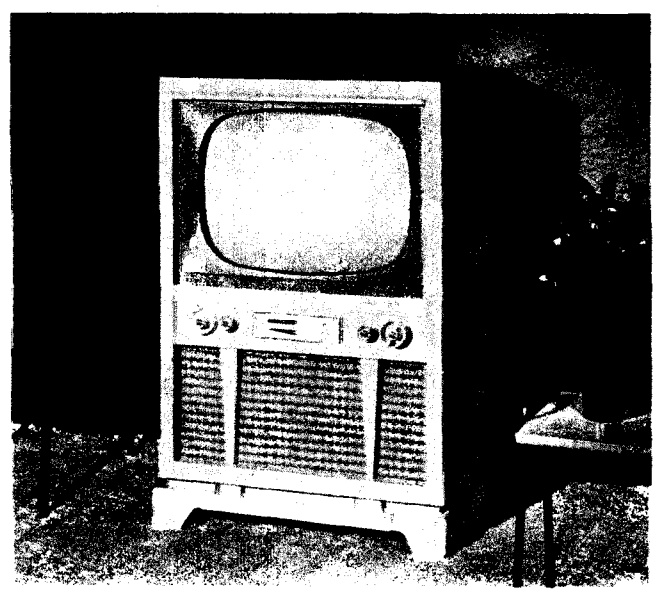

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Just One of the BOYS

By HARRIET FRANK, JR.

That Milty. A regular dictator. Just because he hates women, I'm supposed to feel the same way. Does he want me to stay a kid all of my life?

WE WERE playing in the sand lot out in back of school. The light was getting lousy, and I started missing the easy pop-ups. I hollered to Milty, " 'At's enough! They're dropping all over the place!"

"One more." Milty was swinging his bat all over the place, like he was going to rock it and sock it. He has runty shoulders. He looks smaller than the bat when he gets sweated up about hitting 'em.

George was pitching. I could see he was about fed up with Milty smacking everything he had, and sure enough, George turned and waved me in. I would've let Milty take one more cut but George gets snotty when he's had enough, and we were playing with his equipment.

Milty rested on the bat and watched me. I pumped my arms like I was a track star or something and sprinted up to them. Right away George asked for the bat and ball. He always carries them. He *owns* them and he lets you know it for sure.

"Listen, it's early. Why don't we knock around a few more?" Milty said.

"No. I'm going home," George said. He reached out his hand for the bat.

"It's pretty late," I said.

"You guys are crumbs," Milty said. "We were supposed to work out today. I didn't even go to my piano lesson on account of working out. Wait'll my mother gets a load of that."

"Nobody asked you to not go to your piano lesson," said George. "Gimme the bat, will you?"

Milty slammed it into his gut. George frowned, but you could hit that guy with a sledge hammer, and he wouldn't feel it. He's insensitive to pounding. He just went off without saying anything, and Milty and I started for home.

I like walking home with Milty. I even like going the same way every day so you always know where you're at. I could do it blindfold. The Insurance Agency, the Malt Shop, the bench right at the old bus stop. Generally if we go home at the regular time we meet a lot of guys there. Guys we know from school. We go around in packs. I guess I know about seven other guys as well as I know

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Milty. There's Jackson, Schmidt, Taylor, Quartz, Whitefall, Miller, Kendall (that's Milty) and me—Ben Seller. That makes eight, if you count me. I don't know why we always are hanging around together, but wherever we go, we really take over. For instance when we move into the Malt Shop we take up the whole place. Nobody else can get in. When we go to the Palace to see a show we get a whole row to ourselves. We don't give ourselves any names, like some jerky guys. We don't call ourselves the Panthers or the Tigers or the Marauders or anything stupid like that, but we're together most of the time.

I SEE the most of Milty. That's because he lives in the upper part of the duplex where I live. When a guy lives that close, you're going to spend a little time with him. That suits me all right, because I don't like to hang around by myself much. I don't like to stay home either if it comes right down to that.

My mother and father are okay, but they're not so young. My mother had me when she was about thirty-five, and I guess I was kind of a surprise to her and to my old man, too. He's older than my mother even. He's a tax man, and he has an office in the back of our apartment. He keeps hours in there like it was a regular job, and when he comes out to eat supper he's pretty beat. He doesn't do much but sit around and look at the television.

They're not rough on me or anything like that. I can stay out as late as I want to and I don't have to say where I've been. Milty's mother really lights into him if he's late, but my mother just looks up to make sure it's me and that's all that happens. She doesn't talk much. She does a lot of sewing. Embroidery or something. We've got doilies and stuff all over the house which she made. She likes things sort of frilly. She always looks surprised when she comes into my room, like she didn't know how it happened that she ever had a boy. I don't think she knows what to say to me half the time; the truth is we don't know each other too well. I guess that's one of the reasons I like hanging around with the fellows. It's almost like having brothers.

But Milty says that's not so great either. He's got two brothers: one is a lot younger than he is, and the other one's twenty-three. He says Bill, that's the older one, gives him a hard time. Milty hates women. He says before Bill started chasing around with girls he was a swell brother, but the minute he was going steady he turned into a crumb. Also he fights with Milty's mother, because sometimes he doesn't come home at night and Milty's mother cries and says what kind of an example is it for Milty? Once Bill said, "To hell with Milty," and Milty heard it. For a couple of days he acted kind of funny. He wouldn't talk to me or to any of the fellows. Finally I had to take him out in the garage and put it to him. I told him either we were buddies or we weren't, but I was getting plenty sick of his going around like a kicked dog, and what was the matter?

His face got all wrinkled up, and for a minute there I thought he was going to bust out crying, but he just said he hoped Bill would turn blue, and his women with him.

At the time it didn't matter to me how Milty felt about women because I didn't care much for them myself. For one thing, I didn't know any. You certainly couldn't call the girls in school women. I can't stand them. All they do is stand around and laugh a lot or read movie magazines at lunch hour, or else they walk back and forth out by the sand lot with their noses stuck up in the air when we're working out.

I didn't even think about women until a couple of weeks ago. Most nights we eat supper around six o'clock because my folks like to get it over with and watch the television. We eat our meals in just about fifteen minutes because we don't do much talking. Sometimes my father'll ask me how school is or something like that, but usually he just eats. Mom is pretty much that way herself. She just picks around at her food. I don't know why, because she's a pretty good cook. She doesn't like to eat, I guess. Anyway, afterward I'm supposed to dry the dishes, but Mom lets me off most of the time because Milty usually comes down the back stairs from his apartment and hollers out for me. On school nights we don't go to the show or anything like that because most of the fellows have to stay in. Quartz and Miller and Schmidt aren't doing so hot in their schoolwork, and the rest of the guys have pretty strict parents, so it's usually only Milty and me. There's this back yard we've got that we share with Milty's family. It's not so hot to look at, but there's a little piece of grass, and Mom put out two canvas chairs there last summer. Well, this one night Milty comes down and hollers out for me, and Mom says go ahead, so I went outside. Milty was already sitting in one of the chairs. I went out and sat down in the other one and asked him what's new. That was crazy because I'd only walked home with him that afternoon, but I always say what's new.

"Bill's getting married," he said. "Boy, is she a dog." He looked very red in the face like he was plenty sore. "Women are poison."

I could see he was getting all steamed up about it, so I started talking about the Brooklyn Dodgers.

"I don't want to talk about the Dodgers, Ben," he said.

"Listen," I said, "I think your trouble's psychology. You know, maybe you're jealous on account of you being buddies with Bill and everything."

Milty made a move like he was running a knife across his throat. He always did that when he wanted to show he was fed up with something.

"You can't go axing your own brother," I said.

"You *saw* me just now, didn't you? He's axed."

"Listen," I said, "Milty, maybe you got this thing figured out wrong."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"What's so terrible about girls?" I said. "I mean basically?"

"I hate 'em."

"I'm not so hot for 'em myself," I said, "but I can stand 'em. You can't even stand 'em."

"That's right."

"Pretty soon," I said, looking him right in the eye, "you're not going to be a kid any more. Then what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to join the Marines."

"Marines go out with girls. Plenty of 'em."

"Then I'll join the Air Corps."

It wasn't working so hot. "Between the two of us," I said kind of slowly, "don't you ever . . . think about 'em . . . or anything?"

"What's there to think about?"

"*You* know," I said.

"I'm going upstairs," he said.

"Well, don't get sore."

He got up and looked at me like I had crawled out from under a rock. "You and your psychology," he said.

I began to get sore. "Listen," I said, "psychology is the greatest thing ever invented. Don't knock it, see."

He didn't even answer me. He just started climbing up the back stairs to his own apartment. I let him go, too.

I'd never had a beef with Milty before. Oh, I got sore the time he left my mitt out in the rain and it got ruined, and I was sort of browned off when he let the air out of my bike tires for a gag. But it was nothing like this. He even went to school by himself. I missed him all right. Not so much at school, because the other guys were around, but after school, when I came home to our block, and he wasn't around. It was really murder. I guess that's why what happened, happened.

I came home one day, and I saw this big moving van parked across the street. This house had been for rent, but it was sort of crummy so nobody moved in. Only now it looked like somebody had taken it. I hung around in front of my apartment watching the guys move the stuff. They had muscles, I *mean!* They moved in a sofa and an icebox as big as a horse like they were straws or something. They were really developed! Then, all of a sudden I saw her. This girl. I guess she was around my age, but she wasn't too tall. A lot of girls are great big cows. They make a guy look like a runt. This girl was smaller than me by a head. She had on a red dress. She kept looking at me while I was watching these muscle guys. Finally one of 'em came out and gave her a piece of paper. I could see she was reading it and she didn't look too happy. A couple of times she stopped and looked at me. Then she said something to this guy, and he nodded. She started across the street right for me.

WHEN she came up close I saw she had green eyes and quite a few freckles, but she didn't look as bad as some girls. "Hello," she said.

I said hello back. I wondered what she wanted with me.

She looked sort of nervous. "I'm sorry to bother you," she said, "but . . ."

"What's the matter?"

"I'm just moving into that house," she said, "with my mother. Only she went to see about getting a telephone, and I'm supposed to pay the movers."

"Oh," I said.

She got sort of red in the face. "My mother left twenty-five dollars but the man says the bill is twenty-six fifty."

"Uh-huh."

"I haven't got the rest. He wants to be paid now."

It just so happened that I had three bucks on me from doing some errands around the neighborhood, but I wasn't so hot on shelling it out to somebody I didn't even know. I was going to tell her that I didn't have it, but she got this sort of scared look on her face. "Well, I guess I could lend it to you," I said.

"It's only till tonight. My mother will give it right back."

Like a sucker I shelled out, only first I turned away so she couldn't look in my wallet. I held it out to her.

"It's awfully nice of you, Mister—"

"Ben."

"My name's Elizabeth. Everybody calls me Beth."

"Uh-huh."

"Thanks." She took the money and ran across the street. When she got on the other side she kind of waved at me and smiled. I didn't want to stand around with egg on my face, so I went in the house.

Then I did a stupid thing. I went into our living room and looked out from behind the Venetian blinds. She was still sitting on the front porch. The movers had gone. I thought it was kind of funny. I wondered why she didn't go in the house. Maybe her mother hadn't paid the rent for *that*, either. I must have looked out of that

COLLIER'S

"Maybe they'll look better tonight in dinner jackets"

KATE OSANN

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window for about an hour, but nothing much happened. I don't even know why I did it.

That night after dinner I waited around thinking maybe old Milty would come down like he always does, but he didn't show up. About eight thirty, though, this girl comes over and rings the back doorbell. I said I'd get it and went outside.

SHE had the money in her hand. "Here," she said, and gave it to me. I stuffed it into my pocket. I couldn't think of anything to say.

"You've got a nice back yard," she said. "The one over there is full of junk."

"Yeah," I said, "nobody lived there so everybody used it for a dump."

She kept on standing there. Finally she said that her mother had gone to work. I don't know why she told me.

"She's a waitress. The manager's kind of cranky to the girls, but Mama says she can stand it because she's got plans. We talk about it a lot. She's going to be the hostess in a real nice tearoom, the kind that has flowers on the table all the time." She stopped and then she said, "We've never lived in a house before."

I knew what it was. She was scared.

"In an apartment there are a lot of people," she went on. "You can hear the radios and everything."

"What time is she coming back?"

"Late, I guess."

I don't know why I said it. "I'll walk you over," I said.

We went across the street and up on her porch. There was a swing on it, but it was in lousy shape. She sat on it.

"Listen," I said. "Shouldn't you go inside?"

She shook her head. She was sort of shaking like she was cold.

"There's nothing in there but a few empty rooms," I said. "I'll take a look if you want me to." I could see that's exactly what she had in mind. I opened the door and went in. I walked around through the rooms. There wasn't much to see, just some furniture and some rolled-up rugs. They didn't have a lot of stuff. I came out again. "Nine o'clock," I said, "and all's well."

She laughed so hard you'd think I was Bob Hope. It wasn't such a hot joke, but it made me feel good to have somebody laugh like that. I couldn't think of any way to top it, and I didn't know what to talk about. Usually it makes me itchy to hang around with a girl and not have anything to say, but it was sort of nice with her, kind of peaceful. Pretty soon she asked me what school did I go to. I told her.

"I'll be going there too, I guess. I've always gone to school in Philadelphia up to now."

"How come you moved?"

"My mother got a good paying job here. My father's dead and she has to go to work."

I figured out from that that she couldn't have any friends yet.

"Are the girls at your school very stuck up?" she asked me.

"Plenty."

She nodded like she knew the answer before I said it. "They usually are. They warm up after they get to know you, I guess."

"Who do you hang around with?"

"Nobody. Myself."

"Oh."

"I don't mind it."

"I suppose you read a lot and stuff like that."

"No. I make things. When we get unpacked I'll show you if you like."

"Sure," I said. I didn't really want to see what she was doing. It was probably embroidery, like Mom has all over the place, but I said "sure" because I felt kind of sorry for her.

"Oh, we'll be unpacked by tomorrow. You could come over after school."

"Yeah," I said. I was just humoring her because we have sand-lot practice after school. I wasn't giving up practice to see a lot of crummy embroidery.

THE next day we were out in back of school working out. I was really in the pink. *Nothing* got away from me. Milty showed up looking plenty sheepish and starting knocking 'em all over the landscape. We were really in form. The sun was out, you could see for a mile, and the fellows were hooting and yelling. We do a lot of hooting and yelling when we feel good. I was standing out in left field giving the old Confederate yell when I saw her again. She was wearing that same red dress, only now it showed up like a stop light. She was standing behind the fence watching me. Right away I missed a blooper. It went right through my glove like it had a hole in it. Schmidt was pitching. He started to razz me. I smacked my hand into my glove and told him to knock it off. I acted like I hadn't seen her, but she didn't go away. She just stood there by herself in that dress that would have made a bull go crazy. Then I did a stupid thing. I jumped for a high one. I knew I couldn't get it but I grandstanded it. Then I grabbed my arm like I had pulled it out. "Hold it!" I shouted. "I've wrecked my arm!"

I started in towards them hanging onto it and making faces like it was killing me. They all knotted up around me. Even Milty looked worried, even if he wasn't talking to me.

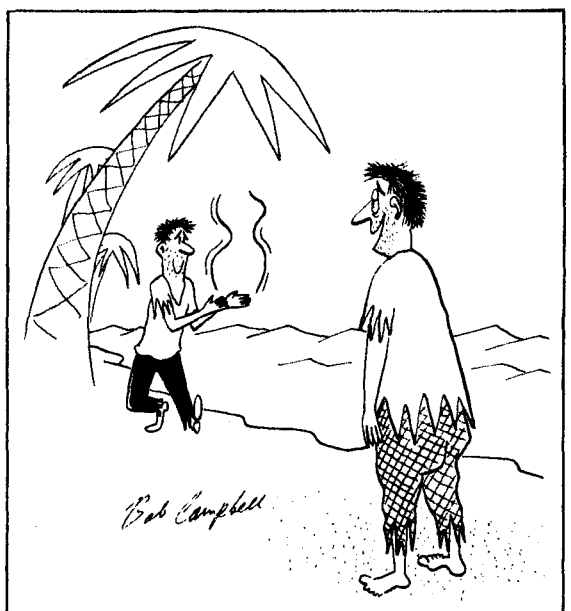
"I can't play with this arm," I said.

"Maybe you ought to get a doctor."

"Naw, I just pulled it out. I'll knock off for today." All the time I could see her standing there.

"Boy, that's rough."

"It'll be okay," I said. I got my



"*What* did you find, eh? An hourglass? Coffee maker? Bowling pin?"

COLLIER'S — BOB CAMPBELL

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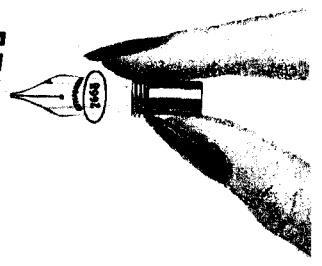

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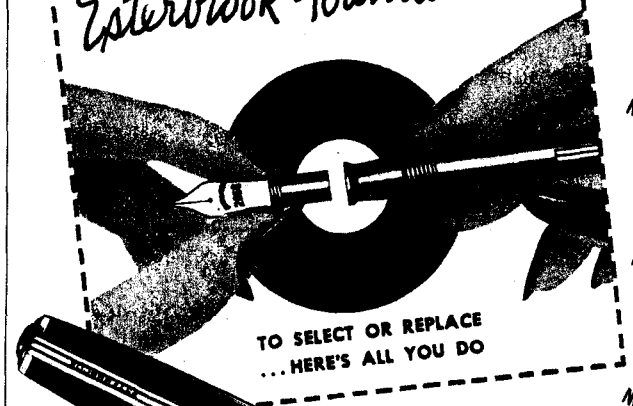

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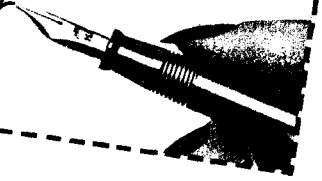

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sweater off the fence and put it around me with one hand. "See you guys."

"Take it easy, Ben, boy."

I went around the back so the fellows wouldn't see me, and there she was. I felt kind of sore at her. How was I expected to work out if she was going to hang around like some dog in a kennel? I made up my mind to tell her not to follow me around. Pretty soon I realized that was just stupid. The sidewalk was public. I couldn't tell her not to walk on it. I decided I was sore at myself for putting on that jerky act about my arm.

SHE caught up with me near the bus stop. "Did you hurt your arm?" she said.

"Naw. I pull it out about every week. It's nothing, only I don't want to wreck it so I quit playing."

"Are you the captain of the team?"

Taylor is the captain but I figured she'd never find out. "Yeah," I said, "I'm the captain."

"I thought so."

Just like that. She thought I was the captain.

"You all settled in?" I asked, feeling pretty good.

She nodded her head. "I've got my stuff out," she said.

"That's fine."

"It's in the back yard if you'd like to look at it."

I'd already loused up the workout, and I didn't feel like just hanging around the house, so I said okay. She sat next to me on the bus, but not too close because she was on the side of my bad arm. It was like she was taking care of me.

Her house looked a lot better. The rugs were unrolled, and the chairs and tables were sort of set around.

I saw a note on the dining-room table, and she said it was for her. "It's my mother," she said. "She's going to work overtime."

"Will you be scared?"

She smiled a bit. "Not any more. If anything happens I could holler off the porch and you'd hear me."

"That's right."

"Come out in back," she said.

We went out on the back porch. There was a kind of bench set out and it was loaded with ship models. Sloops and yawls and outriggers and four-masters. Anything you could think of. They were really something.

"You made *those?*"

She nodded.

"Man, they're great." If there's anything I go for it's boats. I'm figuring on joining the merchant marine when I get out of high school. I really get a charge out of boats.

"My father taught me," she said. "He used to build real ones. It takes a lot of time but it's not so hard." She started in telling me about each one, how much sail they carried, how much water they shipped. She was really salty. You wouldn't even have thought she was a girl, except for that red dress.

"Will they float?"

"Sure."

"We got to find a place to launch 'em," I said. "Hey, we could go to Medford Park. They got a lake." I started moving my arms all over the place. She saw it but she didn't say anything, except that she'd like to try out the lake whenever I said.

The next day I went to school with my arm in a sling. I told the fellows that my arm was pretty bad and I'd have to take it easy for about a week.

They were all pretty worried except Milty. Milty kept on giving me the eye. Later on he caught me down at our locker. "I guess your arm's pretty bad," he said.

"Yeah."

"Bad enough to keep you out of practice?"

"That's right."

"Even though it louses up the whole team?"

"What do you want me to do," I said, "wreck myself for good?"

"You'll wreck yourself all right," he said, "but it won't be on no ball club."

"Don't give me any double talk. What's eating you?"

"I saw *her* hanging around," he said.

"What are you doing?" I said, very sore. "Having me tailed?"

He just gave me a look. Then he kind of nodded his head and gave me the old axing, his hand across his throat.

"Listen," I said, "if that's the way you feel you'd better get your stuff out of the locker." He and I have kept our stuff in the same locker ever since we started school about a million years ago.

"Okay, okay," he said real fast, "that's perfect with me." He started hauling out all his gear. Boy, he had everything in there. It took him a million years to haul it out. I wanted to walk away; but I couldn't. I just stood there watching him pull his junk out. All I could see was the back of his neck. It was as red as anything. Milty gets red when he's sore, and he was on fire.

"There's one thing I can't stand," I said, "and that's being called a phony or a quitter. Right now this arm is pretty bad. Pretty bad. I'd expect a guy who knows me to understand a thing like that."

Milty grabbed up his stuff. He didn't even answer.

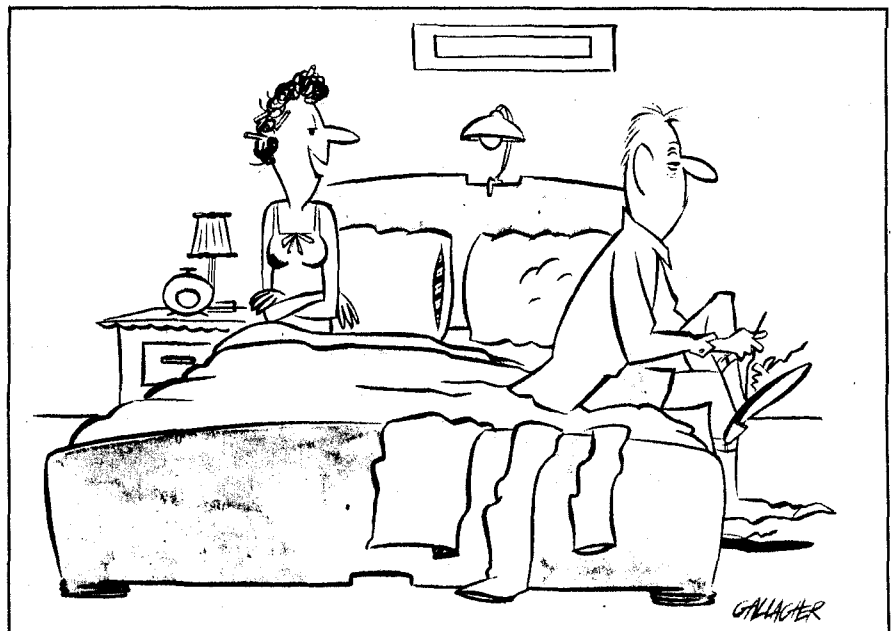
"You're acting very childish," I said.

He stood there all finished. He really looked funny. He had a couple of sweat shirts tied around his neck, and he had ahold of two tennis rackets, some dirty old tennis shoes, and about six tons of other stuff. "Okay, you got what's yours and I got what's mine. I'll see you around." He started down the hall. He looked so crazy and so runty walking off like that I couldn't stand it.

"Milty," I said, "don't be a jerk." He kept walking so I decided he *was* a jerk and he could turn blue.

I wasn't in such a hot frame of mind after that. I'd told Beth I'd be at the Medford Park Lake and she could bring her boats down there, but I wasn't in the mood for it. She was all right, considering she was a girl, but I'd known Milty for a long time. Pulling that crazy stunt about my arm seemed kind of lamebrained to me. What did I want with a girl anyway? The more I thought about it, the sicker I got. Especially when I thought what kind of a girl she was. I'd already noticed that she was plenty skinny. I'd just about decided I wouldn't show up at the lake, when I remembered that I couldn't show up at practice because I'd already said I was wrecked. I had to go to the park whether I liked it or not. That's what hanging around women does for you. It puts you right up the creek.

I stalled around about getting to the park. I thought maybe if I was good and late she'd get fed up and go home. But she was there. This park I go to is about the only place in town where I don't mind hanging around by myself. It's got a lot of trees and this lake that the city engineers put in with a lot of swans and stuff. Not many kids hang around there. It's mostly old people. They come to feed the birds and just sit around in the sun.



COLLIER'S **"Just think—eight hours from now you'll have earned enough for us to eat out again tonight"** JOHN GALLAGHER

I SAW her right away because of the dress. She was waiting on a bench down by the lake. When she saw me she waved. I wasn't going to wave back so I just kept walking toward her. She had something wrapped up in a big package sitting right next to her and she was smiling. One thing, she doesn't have all those wires and braces and stuff that a lot of women have on their teeth. I gave her a kind of lame hello and let it go at that.

"How's your arm, Ben?" she said.

I didn't want to discuss that, so I said it was all right.

She slid over and made room for me on the bench, so I had to sit down. I didn't say much. In fact, I didn't say anything. I just kept wondering if I'd lost my marbles—having a fight with Milty to hang around with a girl.

"I guess I'd better launch them," she said after a minute. "With your arm and all."

"There's nothing the matter with my arm," I said very loud. I stood up and tore the sling off and threw it into the lake. Then I started smacking my hands together like I had my glove on. You'd think she would have thought I was crazy or something like that, but she didn't act like it. She just said, "Oh," and that's all.

"If we're going to launch 'em let's get started," I said. "I can't stick around too long."

She didn't get sore at my shouting. She just unwrapped the boat. It was a sloop, and painted right across it was "Benjamin the First." "Benjamin the First" in gold paint. I looked over at her and I couldn't open my mouth to say a word. She was smiling and shaking at the same time, but all she said was, "It's yours." Like it was nothing.

Then I said a crazy thing. "What did you do it for?" I said. Like she was trying to pull something. It came out all rough and loud like I was sore. I wasn't sore at all. In fact, I'd never felt anything like it, not even when I'm out on the sand lot catching everything in sight.

"I don't know," she said. "I thought you'd like it, I guess."

"Oh."

YOU'D think I had a mouthful of mush. Something was sticking in my throat. It made me feel awfully funny. I wanted to shake hands with her or something. Instead I grabbed at her. I got hold of her arm, right above the wrist where it's sort of bony.

"Beth—"

"Yes?"

"It isn't my birthday or anything in case you thought it was."

"No."

I kept holding onto her. I've got awfully big hands from being so big for my age. I could hardly feel her, she was so skinny. It was like having a hold of a scared bird with its heart beating like crazy. Then a funny thing happened. All of a sudden I knew that being here with her was better than a million years of Milty. It's a hard thing to figure out, considering that Milty is my best friend and a fellow, whereas she is just a girl, but that's what I felt. It didn't make any sense, and I didn't know what I was going to do about it. I couldn't just sit in Medford Park the rest of my life holding onto her like she was handcuffed to me. Only I didn't want to let go, either.

Then she spoke up very quiet, like I was asleep and she didn't want to wake me up. "Don't you want to put the boat in the water?" I guess she could tell something crazy was happening to me.

"Let's just sit and rest for a while," I said. "Maybe a wind will come up. I'd like to see the old Benjamin tacking into a wind."

"All right."

We settled down on the grass, and the sun came down smack on her red dress. It was as bright as a fire wagon and it made her face look pink.

"Maybe you'll move away," I said.

"My mother thinks she'll like it here. The other girls at the restaurant are awfully nice to her."

"That's good," I said. "Listen, you might as well go home with me after school. How about it?"

"You'll be practicing, won't you? The captain has to be at practice, doesn't he?"

"I'm not the captain. I just said that. A lot of times I just say things for the heck of it. Like my arm, for instance: that was just for the heck of it."

I expected she'd ask me a lot of questions about why I did stupid things like that, but she didn't. After a while a breeze did come up, and we walked down to the water and put the boat out to catch the wind. It was terrific to see it scudding along. I wished that all the

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guys I knew in the world were there watching. Benjamin the First. That's what she thought about me. That I was the First. I guess maybe that was what was making me feel like such a hot-shot. My Mom and Pop are pretty used to me and they don't do any talking about how great I am. Milty doesn't talk about personal stuff such as how he feels about anybody, except when he axes 'em, and the rest of the people I know just let you alone. Then all of a sudden I've got my name plastered around a boat in gold letters.

"Hey," I said, yelling it out, "look at her go! Look at her go!" Then all of a sudden I stopped hollering. "Are we crazy or something?" I said, hitting my head. "How'll we get her in?"

By now that old sloop had gone halfway out on the lake.

"Never mind," she said. "I'll make you a lot of them. All you want."

I didn't even listen. I was watching my name floating in the sun where anybody could see it if they looked.

"It'll stay afloat forever," she said. "Honestly."

I hadn't thought about that. Maybe it was better than having it on a line. It was free out there to bob around for a million years.

I was willing to go then, but Beth hung back and watched it dipping up and down for a while. "It's the best I ever made," she said. I thought maybe she was sorry for giving it to me.

"You didn't have to give it to me," I said. I thought I'd go off my nut until she said one way or another.

"Yes, I did," she said. "I had to, Ben." Then she took ahold of me around the wrist right in the same place I grabbed her. I guess she didn't know too much about stuff like that. I guess it was her way of shouting and yelling.

It was getting kind of dark when we got to our block. The minute we got off the bus I could see Milty and all the guys sitting on my front steps, waiting to give me the business. They never get together like that all in one place unless they want to give somebody a big razzing.

She saw them too and she saw my face. "You go on alone," she said, "I'll sneak around the back way."

Boy, I was grateful to her. I'd get off with my hide that way. Then I remembered about her and dark houses. "It's dark," I said. "You don't like to go in the house alone."

"It's all right this time."

"No," I said, "it's not all right. Come on." I put my arm around her and we moved right in on them.

Milty opened his face the very first thing. "Hey, Ben, lover-man!" he called out. Then they all started.

"It's Tony Curtis, fellas!"

"Kiss me again, I'm still breathing!"

"Ben," I heard her say very slow, "you don't have to do this."

WE WERE walking up to her porch. I shoved her down on the lousy old swing and sat beside her. I pushed the swing back and forth very fast, wondering if I shouldn't go over and hit somebody in the face. I heard Milty's voice squeaking and breaking like he was going off his nut. He was shouting louder than all the rest and even when they got tired he kept on. I felt sorry for him. He had nothing to do but yell and yell over something he didn't know anything about.

"Come on," I said to Beth, "let's go inside."

She looked at me sort of scared and said, "They're your friends."

"Listen to 'em," I said. "Listen to 'em, will you? Kids. Just kids."

"Yes, but . . ."

I began to feel good again. "Forget it," I told her. "Maybe it's good enough for them, but it ain't for me. You can't stay a kid forever." ▲▲▲

"And be sure to catch me on TV Wednesday night. I'm having my appendix removed on Channel 13"

COLLIER'S

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You're a Sucker if You CASH

By LEONARD HART

with DEAN JENNINGS and LEE EDSON

A slick con man says it's easy to pass a rubber check. Some tradesmen are so anxious for business they don't bother to ask for identification. In a few years of high living, he pocketed $100,000

ONE rainy day in the spring of 1926, I parked my car a block from a grocery store on the main street of Anaheim, California, and walked through the swinging doors toward the vegetable counter. I had no money in my pocket and couldn't have bought so much as a bean. But I would have money soon, because I was going to pass a bad check.

The check was in my pocket, signed by a nonexistent doctor. I had been in the market once before, and had picked a young clerk as a likely victim. It was easy. I'd hand him the check and pocket the money.

In my hotel room the night before I had carefully thought out every angle and knew that if the boy cashed my check at once, I would be out of town before it could bounce. I was a stranger in Anaheim, and there would be no way to trace me.

Nevertheless, while I waited for the clerk to finish weighing a sack of potatoes, I was shaky. Suppose he questioned the check? Or asked for *identification*? Or called a cop? I was as jittery as a pig on a greased pole. I had no criminal record and had never committed a crime, but I could see myself being dragged off to prison. I saw the clerk looking at me. I pulled the check from my pocket and thrust it at him so he wouldn't notice my trembling hands. "Bud," I said as calmly as I could, "my wife stuck me with the shopping and I've just discovered that I left my wallet home. How about you cashing this small check for me?"

The boy glanced at the check. "Are you Dr. Hammond?" he asked me.

"That's right," I said. "My office is just around the corner." I thought he would never stop staring at the little piece of paper, and for a moment I was tempted to hit for the door. But my appearance must have reassured him.

He turned to the cash register, and counted out two tens and five singles. "Here you are, Doc," he said.

Five minutes later I was in my car and out of the neighborhood. I felt a tremendous sense of relief coupled with high elation. I had passed my first bad check, and it looked like easy money. Since that day I have cashed some 2,000 checks for a total exceeding $100,000. I have used 285 aliases—names I made up. I've passed the paper on almost every kind of establishment you can think up, including places with big signs reading: NO CHECKS CASHED.

On the other hand, I have never raised a legitimate check, nor forged a real person's name. I've never used specially printed checks, check protectors, or any other equipment familiar to the professional forger. With nothing more than a stack of blank checks and an intimate knowledge of people—I was an actor, you might say—I made and spent a fortune and gave a headache to the police of all the major towns in California. If there are any doubts about my standing in the field, my record is one of the longest in the California State Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation.

It covers 15 pages, beginning with that long-ago afternoon in Anaheim. I have been asked many times since why I cashed that first check, and I'm not sure there is any specific reason. Among other possibilities, I had been married not long before, and there was a baby coming. My mother had always indulged me, and kept money in a checking account for me while I was still in high school. But suddenly I was on my own, and I found that I just couldn't get by on the weekly pay check. I had expensive tastes and didn't want to give them up, and at the time it was easy enough to justify the step I took.

I wish now that I had been caught in that first step. I am sure I wouldn't have taken it again.

Forgery is one of the most common crimes in the country today, but few people know how much it has increased during the last 20 years. In the San Francisco and northern California area alone businessmen are losing $2,000,000 a year. The national total is about 200 times as much. Nobody knows the exact figure, because many bad checks are never reported to the police. Much of the loot has gone into the hands of one-shot amateurs who pass rubber checks to pay for some single extravagance or to show off for some girl, but most of the take was grabbed by some 2,500 lone-wolf pros like me.

Why do so many "smart" businessmen fall for the forgery racket? I think there's only one answer: They're so anxious for a sale or new customers that they don't want to be finicky about checks, even when they suspect a fraud. Also, most people have the silly idea that they can judge character by appearance alone. "Sure," they say, "I can spot an honest man."

Well, let's take a look at me. I am now fifty-five years old, round-faced and ruddy and on the plump side. I have been told I have an innocent look. I always dressed neatly, often expensively. I cultivated the detached look of a man who's thinking about business and not the routine, everyday chore of cashing a check. I had enough educational background to talk intelligently with anyone. I was polite, even courtly, in manner.

Most important, I tried to look as though I belonged in the neighborhood. In Los Angeles, I often posed as the district attorney, a building inspector or an assistant public-health worker. In the university towns of Palo Alto and Berkeley, I successfully impersonated visiting professors. I never used any corny disguises, but I often went into stores without my suit coat to give the impression that I had just stepped out of a nearby office. Once I put on a dentist's smock and with no further identification cashed 20 checks in one afternoon. Occasionally I wore a doctor's white coat, with a stethoscope hanging from the breast pocket.

Identification? I never had any. I learned long ago that the more identification cards you offer, the more your prospective victims will think you need it. You might be surprised how few storekeepers ask for identification, anyway, especially if checks are made out to a doctor or some other kind of professional man. In any case, I worked out a psychological approach that effectively forestalled questioning. I'd walk right up and say: "I'm Dr. Ed Jones. My wife usually does the shopping but I'm filling in today." If the clerk still had the temerity to doubt me I would shrug and say: "Oh, that's all right. I'll go down the street where someone knows me." In almost every instance the man would apologize and promptly cash the check.

One time I walked into a place just after the owner had refused to cash a check for a fireman who had vainly produced his driver's license, Social Security card and draft card. On the wall behind the counter was a sign: NO CHECKS CASHED, and the owner was obeying it to the letter. I handed over my own check, made out to a "Dr. Hart," with a penned notation in one corner which said: "In part payment for tonsils." Without a moment's hesitation he cashed it for $35.

I thanked him and pointed to the sign. "That's a great idea," I said. "After all, you've got to know your people."

"That's right," he said brusquely. "Nobody's going to take me for a ride."

You probably suspect by now that I enjoyed myself, and that, indeed, isn't far from the truth. While I needed and wanted money, there was also considerable emotional stimulation and I cashed a lot of checks just for the excitement of beating the game. It was dangerous business, of course, but I took in a good deal of money before I made my first mistake.

I'll never forget it because, though it meant disaster, there was something grimly humorous about it. I went to a service station in my home

Leonard Hart is the pseudonym of a man who for years was one of California's "most wanted." The name is one of the 285 he used to cash phony checks. Now trying to go straight, he wanted to tell his story for the benefit of the trusting people who yearly are defrauded by bad-check artists out of $400,000,000, according to an estimate of The Surety Association of America. The writers first interviewed Hart when he was in San Quentin Prison, at the suggestion of the then warden, Clinton T. Duffy. They have checked his story with prison authorities, court records and the police of the various cities where he swindled the careless and the innocent

PHOTOGRAPH FOR COLLIER'S BY PETER DIMITRI

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MY CHEC

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The swindler had no trouble cashing bad checks when he posed as a doctor and went

town of Berkeley one December day in 1927, chatted idly with the attendant, then gave him a check. He said he didn't have enough cash and would get it at another station across the street. I was pretty cocky at the time and like an idiot I let him go. I didn't know the police had just issued a new circular and that the attendant had recognized me from the description on it. Instead of doing a quick fade-out, I waited patiently for him while he was phoning the cops.

Two detectives picked up the call in their squad car and shot down the street so fast they hit and overturned a peddler's wagon. My brains must have been missing that day because when one of the dicks stepped out of the car and slipped on a pile of lettuce and cabbage, I went over and helped him up. He turned out to be Jim Wilson, an old boyhood friend. "Hiya, Len. Much obliged," he said. He was brushing his clothes when the attendant rushed up all out of breath.

"There's the guy!" he yelled, pointing at me.

"What guy?" Jim said.

"The check passer!" the attendant told him.

Jim gave me a sort of foolish grin. "Yeah?" he said. "How about that, Len?"

"The boy's just kidding," I tried to explain.

The lad jerked the check from his pocket, and waved it angrily. "Like hell I am!"

Jim quit smiling and motioned me into the police car. He drove me to several other stations where I had cashed checks, and the attendants there promptly identified me. They took me to the city jail and booked me. When my wife heard about it, she was so shocked and hurt she bawled. The fellows in the police department were shocked, I guess, almost as though they'd been caught in something themselves. Many were personal friends and they weren't quite convinced until they got a report from the State Division of Criminal Identification. There were 75 "holds" on me in different California cities, and I was really in for it.

I sat in their neat jail that night, but I can't say I felt any remorse. I called myself a sucker for getting trapped by a fuzzy-faced kid, and I think I was resentful of the fact that I was locked up with a bunch of burglars, gun toters and other criminals. I didn't consider myself a criminal. I wasn't tough. I still don't know how to load a gun. In my neighborhood I was always known as a regular fellow, and no one in my family had ever been in trouble. I had good marks in school and adequate spending money during those early years. I was indignant when there were incidents of petty thievery at school, and I'd have been the first to yell for the police if anyone had picked my pocket.

But there I was in jail, and the people who cashed my checks came in for a closer look and called me a crook. I couldn't explain what I had done. I'm not sure even now. I told myself I was playing a game with people, and that I was just outwitting them the same way a clever businessman puts over a fast deal. I didn't stick a gun into their ribs to make them take the check. They could always turn me down.

I was in jail about 15 hours before my uncle came down. He was a well-known lawyer and an officer in the State Bar Association. He said he had arranged a compromise deal for me. "You plead guilty to one check charge," he said bluntly, "and the D.A. will take it easy. You may even get probation if your dad makes up the losses." I took his word for it, but I guess the judge didn't like the setup. He bawled me out, gave me a one-to-14-year sentence, and in March, 1928, I went to San Quentin. Eventually my name came up on the hearing calendar and I was taken before the Board of Prison Directors to have my sentence fixed within the limits set by the judge. Unfortunately, the board chairman at the time was the late Charlie Neumiller, a gruff, hard-boiled old man who had no use for forgers. He whacked me with a 10-year stretch.

"It has a secret compartment where you can hide your husband's wallet"

COLLIER'S — CHON DAY

I went back to my cell, and when it finally sank in, I couldn't take it. I cried, and I was sick, and it was months before I could shake the feeling that I'd been double-crossed. I had it coming, of course, but I wasn't thinking in those terms during the four years I served. I finally got a parole and the board stipulated that among other things I would have to go to sea.

One Sea Voyage Was Enough

I signed for a trip to the Orient on a freighter, and I made one round trip to Manila. I never liked ships anyway and when I got back I drove to Los Angeles and got a job selling electrical fixtures. I didn't clear the trip with the parole people, and the police picked me up in two months. I was slapped into Folsom as a parole violator, with six years more to do. Nowadays, I think they would give a fellow another chance, but the prison and parole setup in California then was quite different. I hated Neumiller and I hated the police, and if there had been any thought of going straight when I left San Quentin, it was pretty well blotted out by the time I was released from Folsom in September, 1936, before my term was up. I decided to pass checks on a big scale and get even with the world.

I developed a simple routine of working one area at a time, covering only one kind of business. In one city, for instance, I went only to butcher shops. I worked this way: I drove down the main street, getting the general layout of the stores and the names of the local banks. I then parked on a parallel street, making sure I wasn't violating any traffic or parking laws. I left my hat on the car seat, and went to the nearest store—usually a florist shop—where I'd be likely to find blank checks and a table on which to write. I filled out about a dozen checks, varying the names and limiting the amounts to $50. I put one in my shirt pocket and the others in my hip pocket. I memorized the letters of the local phone exchange and a few residence addresses in the neighborhood to be prepared for merchants who might ask for my address and telephone.

It's always easy enough to walk into a store, browse around and give the owner or clerk a quick going-over. If they were obviously in a mean mood or were just naturally unfriendly—and a surprising number of them were—I'd get something inexpensive and walk out. But if they were smiling and seemed full of optimism, they were made to order for a clip.

The prize sucker is the man with larceny in his own heart. I recall going into one butcher shop and peering down at the meat on display.

"Just had some unexpected company," I said. "I don't know much about meat because my wife usually does this. Would you pick me out six good steaks?"

Right away I could see he had me pegged for a yokel. He weighed his hand and his foot and gave me bigger cuts than I wanted. So after he wrapped the meat I tossed him a $40 check. "Take it out of this," I said pleasantly.

He was so pleased with his chicanery that he stepped jauntily to the cash register. "Sure thing, pal," he said, and handed me the change.

In most cases I loaded up with merchandise and went up to the owner with some casual remark about the weather, politics or business. Sometimes I hit the stores at slack hours, when the clerks were alone and seemed willing to gab. At other times I went in during the rush hours, especially on Saturday afternoon when a store's regular customers were cashing pay checks. It was easy, for instance, to step behind a woman with a check in her hand, and if I could make out her name I'd say: "Well, hello, Mrs. Jones. How's every little thing?" More often than not—human nature being what it is—she would "recognize" me, smile and return the greeting, thereby establishing me in the owner's eyes as a neighborhood man.

The business of loading my arms with merchandise had another advantage. When I got to the counter or the cashier's desk I would shrug helplessly and say: "Hi, guess I need a third arm. Want to take the check out of my pocket?" He'd reach into my shirt pocket for the check, cash it and give me the difference because, as he could plainly see, I was an okay guy stuck with the afternoon's shopping. I had another little trick which worked wonders, too. I would have a book of checks with the stubs attached, and after I wrote a check I would make the proper notation on the stub and subtract it from the balance. I did this very slowly so the man could steal a peek at my balance, and the whole process seemed normal and convincing.

I didn't keep any of the merchandise, incidentally, and usually dumped it into a public refuse can. That little habit also helped convict me later when a poor Chinese laborer testified he saw me throw away six lamb chops, and was so annoyed by this wasteful gesture that he reported it to the police.

A Good Town to Keep Clear Of

I didn't keep any record of my travels either, because I didn't want any documentary evidence available, but later I began to wish I had. One time, for instance, I went into a place at Walnut Creek, forgetting that I had sheared the owners some months before. A clerk recognized me and called the police. I was rolling out of town when I heard a siren. My heart jumped like crazy, and, because there were no other cars in sight, I knew they were after me. I took my foot off the gas, slowed down and pulled off the road while they were still behind me. They stopped, too, and in my mirror I could see two cops get out and walk toward me. I could also see they hadn't pulled their guns, and my engine was still running.

I waited until they were about 100 feet away, made a sudden U turn, and bore down on them. They dived into a ditch without getting a chance to see my front license plate—I never used a rear plate—and I was a mile down the road before they got reorganized. I hit it up to 80, turned off a side road and hid behind a clump of trees. I waited and saw them tearing down the road. I felt 10 years older.

Another time I was chased by a suspicious victim who jumped on my bumper just as I was starting off. He kept yelling at me to stop, but he stuck like a suction cup until I luckily found a very rough road and literally shook him loose.

I encountered another wise guy that same week, a fellow who might have outsmarted me under other circumstances. He ran a filling station. I told him I was known in the drugstore across the street, but that they didn't have enough cash on hand. "Tell you what you do," he said. "Have somebody from the drugstore wave to me if it's okay and they know you." I went to the drugstore, got a pack of cigarettes and pulled out a check.

"Your buddy at the service station is short on cash," I said. "But he will vouch for me. I'm an old customer. Just wave to him and you'll see."

The druggist stepped outside and waved. The station man waved back. The druggist cashed one check and the station man cashed the other. The power of suggestion is wonderful.

I went along unrestrained for almost a year before my luck went sour again. I always knew, to be sure, that reports

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on my checks were piling up at Sacramento, and that bulletins for my arrest—they had my picture on them by that time—were being posted all over the state.

But I always felt—as every criminal does—that I was too sharp for them, and meanwhile I was living high. All the best hotels, nice clothes, good liquor and good cigars, and if my conscience bothered me, which I don't think it ever did, I could always tell myself that at least I was putting my son and daughter through college.

I never lived at home during this period because the cops knew the address and would have easily picked me up. My wife believed I had a new traveling job and that my experience in Folsom had cured me of the check-passing habit. I encouraged her belief, of course, and I continued to visit San Francisco to see the children whenever I thought I could get away with it. I sent her money during the time she thought I was going straight. While I was in prison she worked in a San Francisco department store. I don't know whether the cops ever asked her about me while I was on the wanted list. Thus I was in San Francisco one day in July, 1937, and had just about decided to work the game in another state, when two cops bracketed me on the street, and I knew this was it again.

I didn't see how I could possibly beat the rap. They had me on 200 counts or more. I refused to identify any of the checks, and phoned a couple of criminal lawyers for advice. Too bad, they said, if I couldn't afford their high fees. I couldn't. I took a long chance and decided to fake insanity. I did it by picking imaginary lint from my clothes and by pretending I couldn't talk. I must have put on a wonderful act, because I fooled the guards, a judge, and even the psychiatrists, and during 1937 and 1938 I spent 10 months at the Mendocino State Hospital before other psychiatrists got around to exposing me. I was discharged and taken to court on an old charge of the Berkeley police. I handled my own defense, pleading "not guilty" and "not guilty by reason of insanity." The latter plea I thought was a brilliant idea, because, in their joy at getting me out of the hospital, the doctors had neglected to give me a certificate of recovery. But the district attorney belatedly got one from the hospital, and in November, 1940, I entered San Quentin again.

Couldn't Stick to Shipyard Job

I wish I could say that the third trip to a big house taught me a lesson. It didn't. I was paroled after three years, got a job (a job which the parole board approved) in a shipyard and was soon spending more than I earned. I got sore about the whole situation, and wrote a check. When you pass one, you might as well hit for the jack pot because the rap is the same for one or a hundred. I quit the shipyard job and went out on my old circuit, and in time the police caught up with me in Long Beach. They came up to my hotel room, and I emptied my wallet on the table. There was $500 in bills in the pile and I said: "I've got an urgent business appointment in Denver and I don't really need this money." One of the dicks gave me a deadpan look and told me to put it back. I was returned to Oakland a couple of days later, and they had me cold with a whole parade of people I had swindled. The trial lasted 10 days and I wound up in November, 1943, in San Quentin for the third time.

The prison was now staffed with psychiatrists, and in one early interview they told me I was behaving true to form. They meant that check passers are the worst repeaters in the entire criminal group, and probably unredeemable. I heard them say that forgers need an ego-lift to compensate for an inferiority complex, and there may be some truth in that. I have thought more than once that this explanation is probably a lot of nonsense but it's one that is perhaps convenient for all concerned. To my mind a man is a criminal or he isn't a criminal, and I believe that a fellow can quit crime the way an alcoholic quits drinking. It's no pushover, but it can be done. I've done it.

A Haven for Check Passers

I discovered a lot of new outlets in San Quentin. I took up architectural drawing and I was assigned to the chief engineer's office where most of my fellow check passers seemed to be assigned sooner or later. I had always been mechanically inclined, and I began to work on a couple of inventions I had always wanted to develop. I also wrote a 24-page booklet on how to stop check passers and gave it to the warden. I was willing to print it at my own expense—it contained a lot of information I've discussed here—and I wanted it distributed to banks, stores and business organizations.

The idea got publicity, but was considered impractical by many businessmen. They told me that many merchants are insured against check losses, that most of them expect a certain percentage of loss anyway, and that the steps I had in mind would irritate potential customers.

In short, as I've said before, these stores want to go right on cashing checks and taking the loss. I think it's significant, just in passing, that it is always the same stores that are swindled.

In case you would like my suggestions, however, they go like this:

1. Don't cash checks for total strangers.
2. Don't cash a check and hand over the money immediately. Tell the customer it will only take a moment to clear it, and if he's willing to wait, you can bet he's honest.
3. Don't cash checks for unknown customers during the hours when you can't reach the bank on the phone.
4. Don't cash ANY checks.

As for me, I know I will never cash another bad check. My so-called criminal career was a costly luxury, and when I was paroled from San Quentin in June of 1951 I had nothing left to show for it except a total of 19 years in prison. I am earning $600 a month as a mechanical engineer in a West Coast manufacturing plant now, and I have a clean record. My wife divorced me long ago—and I must say I don't blame her—but my son stuck with me, and one day soon I hope we will be in business together. My son and my employers understand something of the emotional quirks that made me a check passer, and they are confident that I now have a different perspective on life. ▲▲▲

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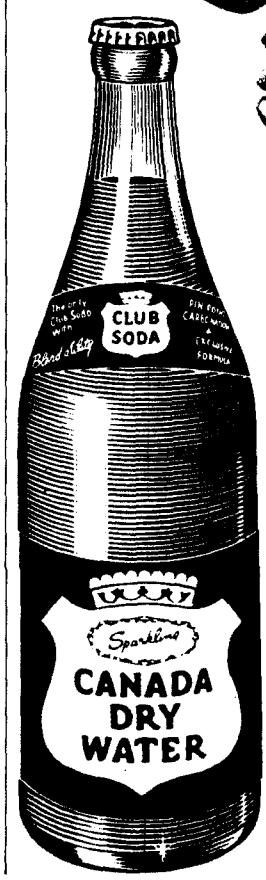

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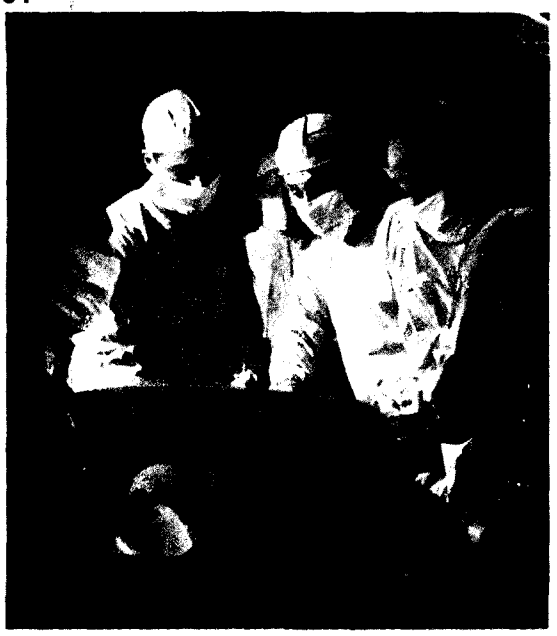
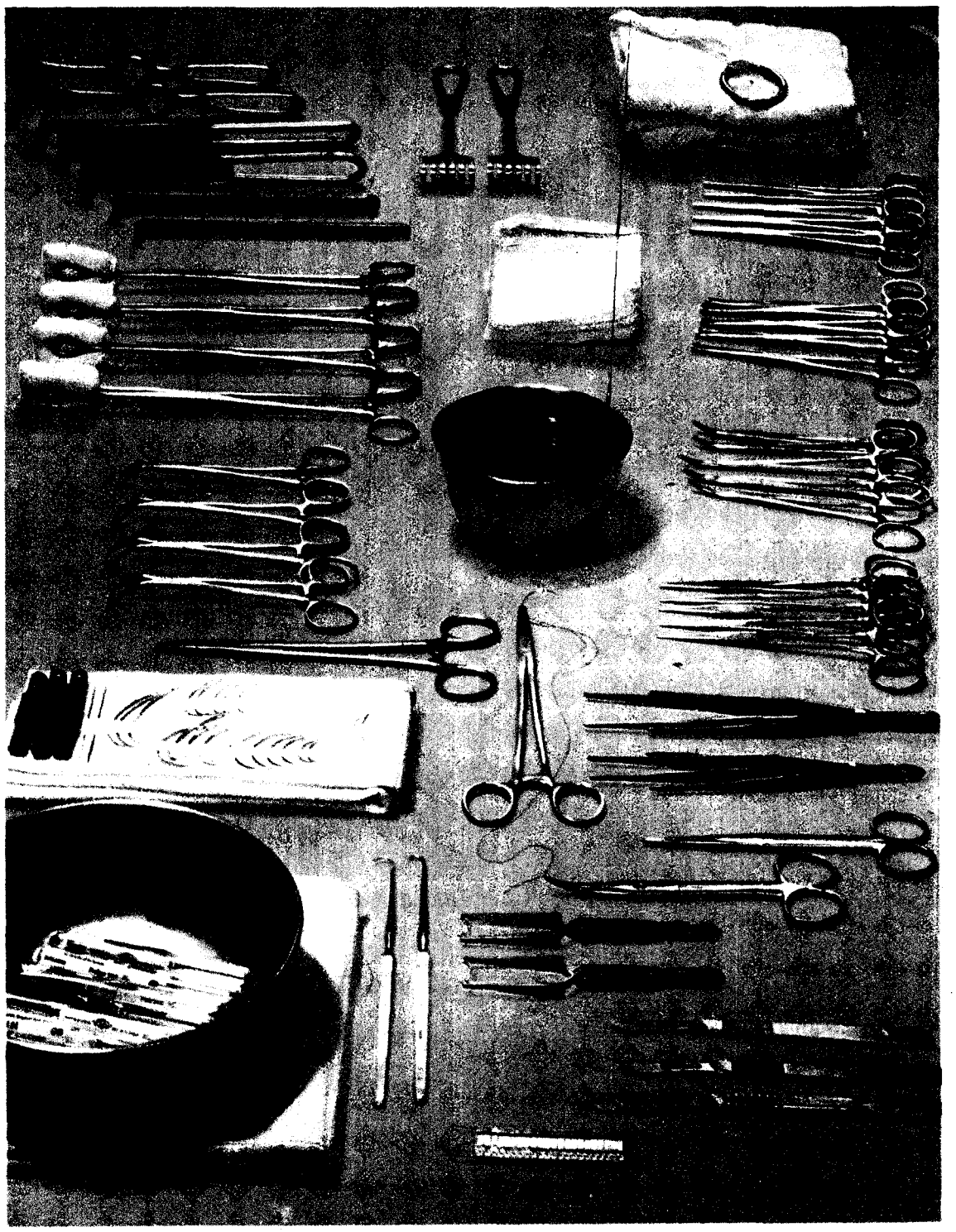


Skilled medical team performs an operation

These Tools Help Keep Your Body In Repair

A surgeon needs a good deal more than a sharp knife and a needle and thread for today's lifesaving operations



Instruments, gauze, basins and sutures (above) form a basic group of tools for any major surgery. While set is typical, hospital procedures differ and it is subject to variations

ALMOST everyone can describe the tools a carpenter uses to do his work, but few of us have more than a fuzzy idea of the vast number of specialized instruments a surgeon may call upon to keep the human body in repair.

In the minds of many laymen, just about all a doctor needs in surgery is a sharp knife and a needle and thread. Actually, the modern hospital operating room is equipped with literally hundreds of medical tools of all kinds. They can range in size from a small, tweezers-like instrument for removing splinters to a rib-spreading retractor about a foot square which keeps the chest open during cardiac operations. And they make possible such varied surgery as the delicate splicing of the large aortic artery leading into the heart or the job of transplanting a cornea from one eye to another.

The instruments in the picture at the left are a basic set of tools for use in any major operation. In the page of photographs on the right is a selection of specialized instruments for eye, abdominal, heart and bone surgery, and for the removal of tonsils and adenoids. The instruments were photographed at New York City's Mt. Sinai Hospital.

In the basic group (clockwise from top right):

¶ Gauze pads which protect and hold body organs away from the area of surgery. The metal ring on top remains outside the incision in abdominal operations to make sure that the pads are removed before the wound is closed.

¶ Four sets of similar-looking instruments. On top is a set of hemostats—clamps which pinch off the blood vessels and control the flow of blood. Next are tissue clamps, and then two more sets of hemostats.

¶ And in the following order: two thumb forceps for grasping tissue; two pairs of scissors; two forceps for applying clips which will hold skin edges together while wound is healing; three scalpels, and skin clips on a wire holder.

¶ Skin hooks which hold the skin while the clips are applied.

¶ A basin that contains tubes of catgut sutures for stitching tissues.

¶ A pad on which are surgical needles and spools of thread for stitching or tying.

¶ A needle holder used in actual stitching.

¶ Towel clips which fasten towels to the skin around incision to keep the opening sterile.

¶ Forceps for holding gauze and sponges.

¶ Two groups of retractors (including the forklike instruments) which hold incisions apart.

¶ And in the center, reading down, are: gauze sponges, a basin of antiseptic solution and a needle holder.

The doctor's tools can be a little unpleasant for the layman to contemplate, but less so, if you look on them as symbolizing the centuries of steady medical progress which have helped make possible today's miracles of lifesaving surgery. ▲▲▲

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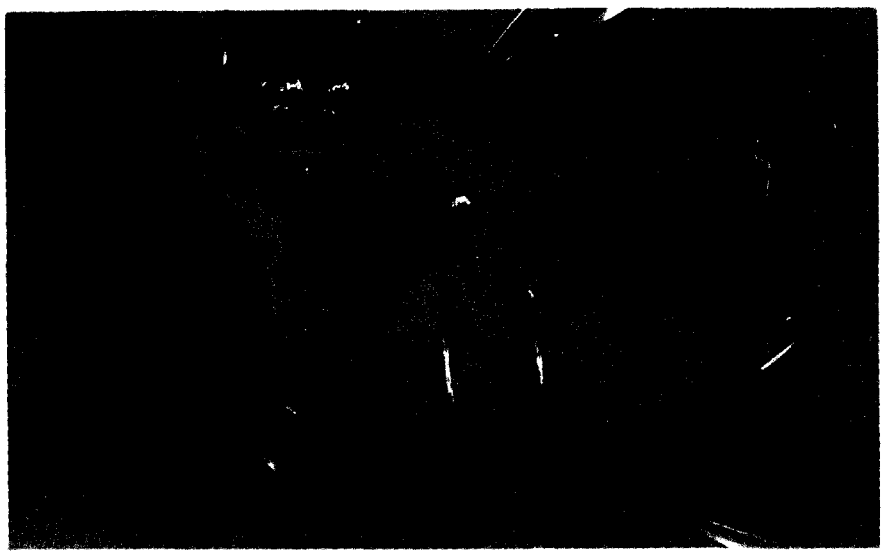
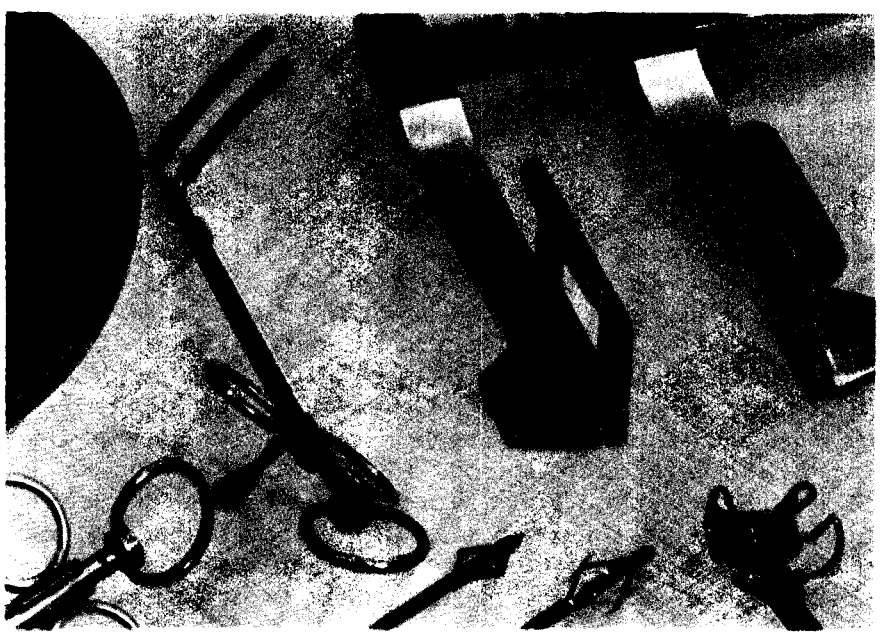
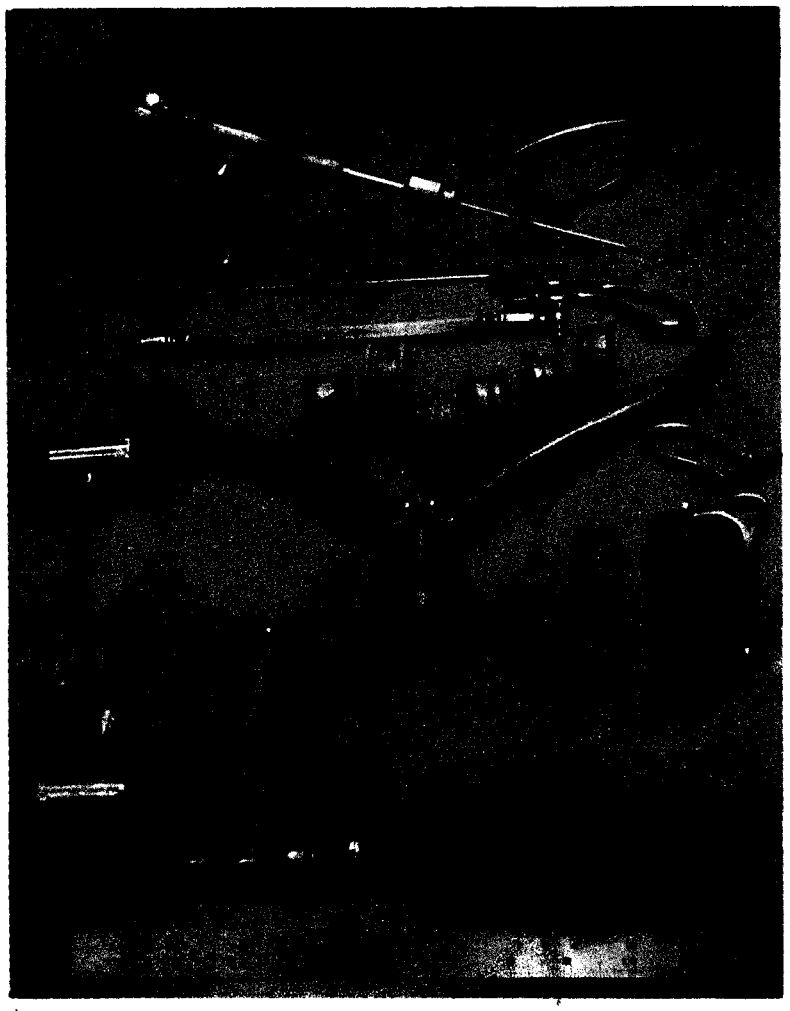


For eye surgery (bottom left and clockwise): needle holder, in hand; implanter for inserting gold ball in socket after removal of an eye; implants in jar; needle holder; eyelid retractor; two self-retaining eyelid retractors; special eye scissors; a different type of retractor

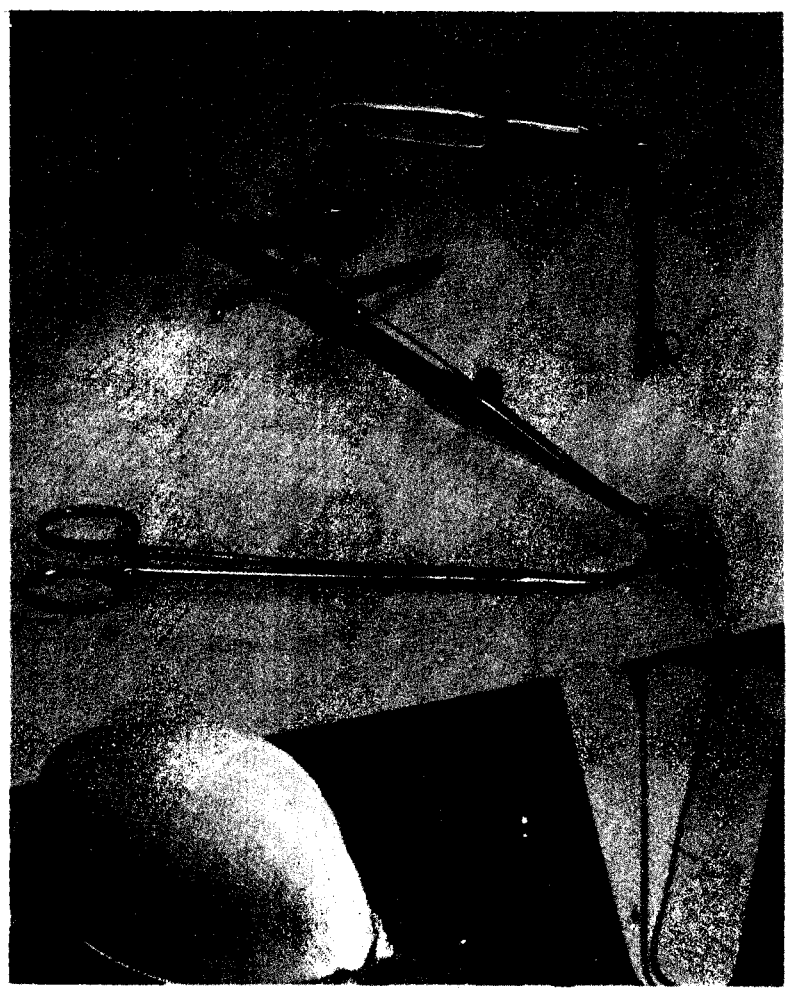
For abdominal surgery (top left, clockwise): pair of surgical gloves; self-retaining abdominal retractor; a clamp which is applied to the intestine before cutting; large abdominal retractor; rubber-covered clamp for occluding (temporarily closing off) a portion of intestine



For heart surgery (top left, clockwise): basin; clamp for temporarily closing off major blood vessel; rib-spreading chest retractor; another clamp for blood vessel; instrument for dilating large blood vessel valve; instrument for cutting large blood vessel valve; clamp handle



For bone surgery (top left, clockwise on outside): bone drill; retractor (for tissue); bone saw; mallet; ruler; gouges and chisels; mallets. In center (top down): another bone saw; wire sometimes used for suturing bone or tissue; wire cutter



For tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy (top left, clockwise): snare to pinch off tonsil at base; instrument used to extract adenoid tissue; tongue depressors; bottle containing anesthetic agent; mask through which the anesthetic will be given; long hemostat

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY IKE VERN

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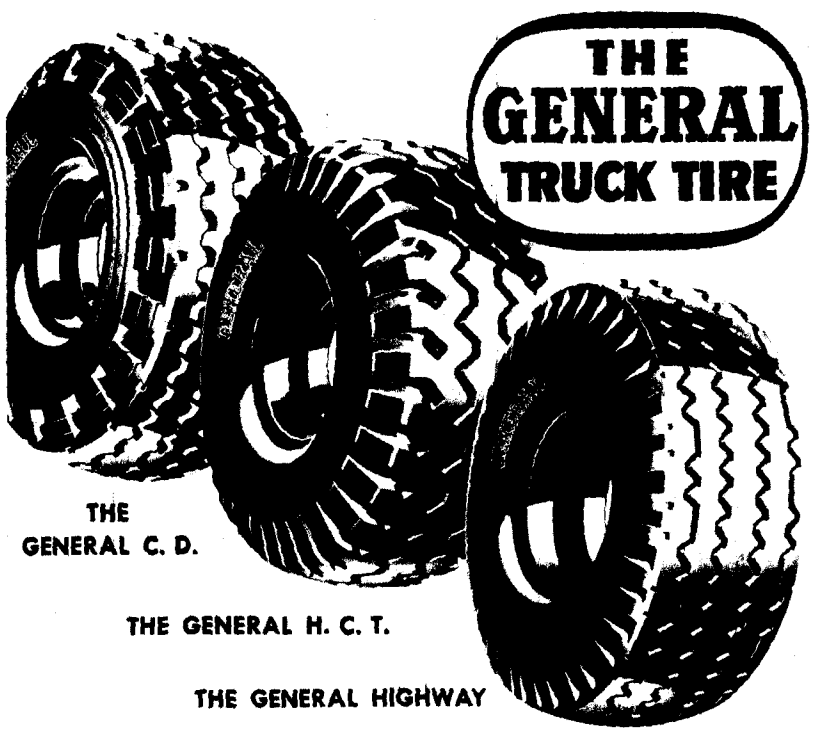

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San Jose, Cumming & Newton, Inc.
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Santa Monica, Gen. Tire of Santa Monica
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Southgate, Wood's General Tire Serv., Inc.
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Danielson, Danielson Oil Co., Inc.
Hartford, Jack The Tire Expert
New Haven, The General Tires, Inc.
New London, Tire Service Co.
Norwich, A. J. Senft & Son
Stamford, Lincoln & Co.
Waterbury, King-Hill General Tire Co.

DELAWARE
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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Washington, Croker General Tire Co.

FLORIDA
Clearwater, Pinellas Tire & Rubber
Ft. Lauderdale, Parker General Tire Serv.
Jacksonville, Pruitt Tire Co., Ltd.
Miami, General Tire Service, Inc.
Ocala, Jack Tucker's Service
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Pensacola, Town & Country Tire Service
St. Petersburg, McIntyre, Incorporated
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Augusta, General Tire & Supply Co.
Dalton, Doyle Hayes Tire Service
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IDAHO
Boise, Hardy Bros.
Buhl, Glen's Super Service
Lewiston, Gen. Tire & Retreading Co., Inc.
Pocatello, Sorenson-Hardy Gen. Tires, Inc.

ILLINOIS
Alton, Alton Tire Sales Co.
Aurora, Stafford Auto Supplies, Inc.
Bloomington, Uptown Tire Service
Chicago, Dunne General Tire & Sup. Co.
Chicago, Interstate General Tire, Inc.
Danville, The Geo. B. Satterwhite Co.
Decatur, Lukens Tire Co.
Peoria, Nelson General Tire Co.
Rockford, Karl Bietau General Tire Co.

INDIANA
Anderson, Rollinger Gen. Retreading, Inc.
Evansville, Van Winkle-Stagg, Inc.
Ft. Wayne, Sagstetter General Tire Co.
Hammond, General Tire Sales & Service
Indianapolis, General Tire Co.
Muncie, Clark Service Company
New Castle, Henry County Tire Store
Shelbyville, Hites General Tire Company

IOWA
Cedar Rapids, Culver General Tire, Inc.
Davenport, Westphal General Tire Co.
Dubuque, Theisen-O'Neill Tire Co.
Sioux City, O'Keefe Gen. Tire Service

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Great Bend, Furrey General Tire Co., Inc.
Topeka, Daily General Tire Service, Inc.
Wichita, Boone General Tire Company

KENTUCKY
Ashland, Wurts Bros., Inc.
Henderson, Schmidt Service Center
Lexington, Marlowe General Tire Co.
Louisville, Hurry-Up Broadway
Owensboro, Gen'l Tire of Owensboro, Inc.
Paducah, Owens General Tire Service
Princeton, Sweeney's Service Station
Somerset, Ben S. Mattingly

LOUISIANA
Baton Rouge, Commercial Tire Co., Inc.
Bogalusa, Casanova Sales & Service Co.
Houma, 63 Tire Service
New Iberia, Ray Tire Co.
New Orleans, Jimmie Hanemann Tire Serv.
Shreveport, Adair Tire Co.

MARYLAND
Baltimore, O'Toole General Tire Co.
Frederick, Keyser General Tire Service, Inc.
Hagerstown, Hanna General Tire Ser., Inc.
Westminster, Yingling General Tire Serv.

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Boston, General Tire Co.
Fitchburg, Tower's General Tire
Greenfield, Petrin Motor Sales, Inc.
Pittsfield, Pittsfield Retread & Tire Co., Inc.
Springfield, Fagan's General Tires Inc.
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Adrian, Hadden General Tire Co.
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Ann Arbor, Robey Tire Service
Battle Creek, Bill Wood Tire Co.
Benton Harbor, Benson Tire Co.
Detroit, General Tire Service Company
Detroit, Motor Truck Services, Inc.
Detroit, Tires, Inc.
Flint, Flint General Tire Co.
Grand Rapids, Bill Elder
Holland, Bill's Tire Shop
Iron Mountain, Hoskings Uptown Service
Ishpeming, D & C Sales & Service
Kalamazoo, Otto Kihm Tire Co.
Lansing, Roberts Tire Sales, Inc.
Mt. Pleasant, Bill Murray's Tire Service
Muskegon Hts., General Bader's Tire Serv.
Pontiac, Pontiac General Tire Co.
Traverse City, Doug Linder Tire Co.

MINNESOTA
Brainerd, Mathisen Tire Co.
Duluth, Mathisen Tire Co.
Minneapolis, The General Tire Co.
Montevideo, Anderson's Super Serv., Inc.
Virginia, Mathisen Tire Co.
Winona, Kalmes Tire Service
Worthington, Barrier Tire & Recap.

MISSISSIPPI
Clarksdale, Bill Ogden Tire Service
Cleveland, Kossman Buick Co.
Columbus, Cochran Tire & Oil Co.
Greenville, England Motor Co., Inc.
Hattiesburg, Ames Tire & Service Co.
Jackson, McLemore General Tire Service
Vicksburg, Williams General Tire Service

MISSOURI
Boonville, Boonville Recapping & Tire Co.
Cassville, Smith Tire & Service Station
Columbia, Whiteley General Tire Service
Jefferson City, Cole & Smallwood
Kansas City, McDowell Tire Co.
Kirksville, Frank R. Truitt Service
St. Joseph, Van Tire & Battery Service, Inc.
St. Louis, General Tire Co. of St. Louis

MONTANA
Billings, Empire Tire Co.
Butte, General Tire Supply
Helena, Johnston Motors, Inc.
Kalispell, Harry Koch Tire Service
Miles City, Beacon Carter Service

NEVADA
Reno, Marshall A. Guisti, Ltd.

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Dover, John P. Cassily Tire Co.

NEW JERSEY
Asbury Park, McManus & Fisk, Inc.
Camden, Camden Storage Battery Co.
Dover, Schwalb Tire Co.
Elizabeth, John J. Cross, Inc.
Hackensack, Brown-Hanselman Co.
Jersey City, McGuinness Gen. Tire Co.
Newark, The General Tire Co.
Orange, Saenger-Smith Co., Inc.
Paterson, Brustlin Bros.
Perth Amboy, Perth Amboy General Tire
Salem, Hassler Tire Service
Toms River, Reliable Tire Service
Trenton, Duffy Tire Co.
Vineland, Strauss Bros. Gen. Tire Ser., Inc.

NEW MEXICO
Albuquerque, Galles Motor Company
Hobbs, Moyers General Tire Service, Inc.
Roswell, Lance Bros., Tire Service
Santa Fe, Santa Fe Motor Co.

NEW YORK
Albany, Terry-Haggerty Gen. Tires, Inc.
Binghamton, General Tire Service
Bronx, Bronx General Tire Co.
Brooklyn, Kings County Gen. Tires, Inc.
Buffalo, Dowdall-Palmer General Tires, Inc.
Canandaigua, Clifford E. Murphy
Cortland, Tallmadge Tire Service
Dunkirk, George Ray, Inc.
Flushing, Northshore Tire Corp.
Franklin Square, Nassau Gen. Tire Serv., Inc.
Herkimer, W. D. Stearns Tire Company
Hornell, Hornell General Tire Service
Jamaica, Jamaica General Tire Co.
Jamestown, Emblem Oil Co.
Kingston, Hudson Valley Tire Co.
Long Beach, J & J Miles Rubber Co.
Long Island City, Astoria Tire Co., Inc.
Monticello, State Tire Recappers
Mt. Vernon, Austin-Bliss G'n. Tire Co., Inc.
Newark, McDougall Service Garage
Newburgh, Harvey Bros., Inc.
New York, The New York Gen. Tire Co.
Olean, Sullivan & Murray Co.
Peekskill, Lazar's Tire Service
Poughkeepsie, Hinkle Gen. Tire Co., Inc.
Rochester, Scanlon Lewis Gen. Tires, Inc.
Schenectady, Kline General Auto Supply
Syracuse, Syracuse General Tire Corp.
Tompkinsville, S. I., Kieran Tire Co., Inc.
Utica, Boyd General Tire, Inc.
Watertown, Holton & Teghtmeyer, Inc.
White Plains, Robertson & Pohl, Inc.

NORTH CAROLINA
Asheboro, Carolina Retreading Co
Burlington, General Tire Supply, Inc.
Charlotte, Charlotte General Tire Co.
Durham, Ingold Tire Co.
Fayetteville, Jones-Lanham Tire Co., Inc.
Goldsboro, Prince Tire Co.
Hickory, Sudderth Tire & Battery Service
Kinston, Kinston Tire Company
Raleigh, Hunt General Tire Co.
Roanoke Rapids, Blackwell Tire Company
Salisbury, Haden's Tire Service, Inc.
Sanford, Sanford Tire Service
Wilmington, Neuwirth Bros.
Winston Salem, Parrish Tire Company

NORTH DAKOTA
Bismarck, Renz & Zierke Gen. Tire Service
Fargo, Swenberg Tire Company

OHIO
Akron, Bill Paschal's General Tire Service
Akron, Nu-Tread Tire Co.
Alliance, Brown-Holt General Tire Co.
Athens, Buck Auto Supply
Bryan, Mac's Tire Shop
Cadiz, Cadiz Tire Sales & Service
Canton, Sampson General Tire Co.
Chillicothe, Art Howson's Tire Service
Cincinnati, Sohngen & Bischoff
Cleveland, The General Tire Co.
Columbus, General Tire Sales
Dayton, Knapp General Tire Service, Inc.
East Liverpool, Litten Motor Sales
Elyria, Geo. Hermann, Inc.
Fremont, Hamilton Tire & Battery
Galion, Galion Tire Shop
Hamilton, Bob Shute General Tire, Inc.
Lancaster, Fred Shaeffer's Tire Shop
Lima, Lima General Tire Co.
Mansfield, Bailey Tire Service
Marietta, Mahone Tire Service
Middletown, Russ Dempster Gen. Tire Sales
Mt. Vernon, Pond's Tire Shop
Newark, Zeiher's Corners Hawkinson T'rd
New Philadelphia, Fishel Tire Service
Painesville, Hach's Auto Service, Inc.
Steubenville, Shaffer's General Tires, Inc.
Toledo, Gene Richard & Sons, Inc.
Warren, Varley's Warren General Tires
Willard, Heisler, Incorporated
Wooster, Zurcher Sunoco Service
Xenia, Service Tire & Auto Sales, Inc.
Youngstown, Safety Tire Co.

OKLAHOMA
Altus, Foster-Ellis Tire Service
Chickasha, B & M Tire Service Co.
Clinton, Smith Tire Shop
Oklahoma City, Benson Gen. Tires, Inc.
Shawnee, Brewer General Tire Company
Tulsa, General Tires, Inc.

OREGON
Grants Pass, Jim & Harry's Tire Service
Klamath Falls, Monarch Tire Service
Medford, Hawkinson Tire Tread Service
Mehama, Philippi Tire Service
Oregon City, Hubach & Parkinson Tire Co.
Pendleton, Ford's Tire Service
Philomath, State Tire Company
Portland, Mel Goodin Tire Co.
Salem, State Tire Co.
The Dalles, Woolsey Gen. Tire Service

PENNSYLVANIA
Allentown, Lehigh Valley Tire Co.
Beaver Falls, Pugh & Scott
Bradford, Motor Inn Filling Station
Brookville, Auto Service Station
Butler, Ray Andre
Chambersburg, Ross Gen. Tire Serv., Inc.
Easton, Easton Tire Service Co.
Erie, Chaffee Tire Co.
Greensburg, A. L. McClintock
Hanover, Goodfellow Chevrolet, Inc.
Harrisburg, V. D. Leisure Co.
Jenkintown, W. C. Fleck & Bros., Inc.
Johnstown, The Del Boring Tire Service
Kittanning, Bill Fox Tire Service
Lancaster, Lancaster General Tire Co.
Leechburg, Leechburg Tire Co.
Millvale, Corfield Tire Service
Philadelphia, Carnell & Bradburn
Pittsburgh, Campbell General Tire Co.
Pittsburgh, Maxon Tire Service
Pittston, Consumers Gas & Oil Co.
Pottsville, Leisure-Freed Tire Company
Scranton, A. H. Steppacher
Sharon, John B. Lewis
Sunbury, Leisure-Black Tire Co.
Uniontown, Crawford-Webb
Vandergrift, Gosser Tire Service
Warren, Emblem Oil Company
Washington, Howley Gen. Tire Serv., Inc.
York, Willard General Tire

RHODE ISLAND
Providence, General Tire Service, Inc.

SOUTH CAROLINA
Anderson, McAdams Tire Service
Charleston, Thrower-VanNess Tire Ser., Inc.
Columbia, Columbia Tire Service, Inc.
Greenville, Hunter's Tire Service
Spartanburg, Whitlock Tire Service

SOUTH DAKOTA
Deadwood, Eddie's Tire & Glass
Rapid City, Eddie's Tire Service
Sioux Falls, Keeler's Super Service
Watertown, Mel Dahle Tire Company

TENNESSEE
Bristol, Davis Tire & Recapping, Inc.
Chattanooga, General Tire Service, Inc.
Columbia, Russell & Bartlett Tire Co.
Hartsville, T. A. Jones & Son, Recappers
Jackson, General Tire Service
Kingsport, Duffer-Taylor Tire Service, Inc.
Knoxville, General Tire Sales Co.
Lebanon, Hinson Tire Co.
Livingston, Doak General Tire Co.
Memphis, Steepleton General Tire Co.
Murfreesboro, Russell Tire Co.
Nashville, McDowell General Tire Co.
Union City, Better Recappers

TEXAS
Abilene, E. N. Compere
Alice, Adams General Tire Service
Amarillo, Baker-Askew Tire Co.
Beaumont, Beaumont Gen. Tire Sales Inc.
Brownsville, Hunt General Tire Service
Colorado City, Dave Helm Tire Co.
Conroe, Louie Hoopes Tire Co.
Corpus Christi, Dickenson Gen. Tire Service
Dallas, General Tire Service
El Paso, Turner's Gen. Tire Service, Inc.
Ft. Worth, Hertel General Tire Co.
Houston, General Tire Sales of Houston
Longview, McCann Tire Service
Lubbock, Woody Tire Co.
Midland, Midland Tire Co.
Odessa, Garrison Gen'l Tire Service
Pecos, Pecos Tire Company
Plainview, Kiker's Service Station
San Angelo, Red Covington Tire Service
San Antonio, Harper General Tire Co.
Texarkana, Cullom-Walker
Tyler, Prickett-McElroy Tire Co., Inc.
Victoria, Allen Tire & Recapping Service
Wichita Falls, Earl Hodges Tire Service

UTAH
Richfield, Pearson & Crofts
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Danville, Stinson Tire Co.
Harrisonburg, Glen Shomo
Lawrenceville, Brunswick Rubber Co., Inc.
Lexington, Spencer Tire Co.
Lynchburg, Lynchburg Ramp Garage, Corp.
Norfolk, Joynes Tire Co.
Norton, Lonesome Pine Recapping Co.
Radford, Wilson Pontiac Co.
Richmond, Gen. Tire Co. of Richmond, Inc.
Staunton, Dozier Tire Co.
Suffolk, Tadlock Tire Service
Virginia Beach, Bell-Edwards Tire Corp.

WASHINGTON
Aberdeen, General Tire Service
Bellingham, Swan General Tire Service
Seattle, General Tire Co.
Toppenish, City Tire Service
Vancouver, MacNab's Service
Yakima, Tire Sales & Equipment

WEST VIRGINIA
Beckley, Lucas General Tire, Inc.
Charleston, Park Tire Co., Inc.
Clarksburg, Barman Tire & Sales Co.
Elkins, General Tire & Battery Co.
Parkersburg, Mahone Tire Service
Welch, Welch Tire & Tread Co., Inc.
Wheeling, Wheeling Lincoln-Mercury

WISCONSIN
Appleton, Ray's Tire Co.
Fond du Lac, Hayward Tire Co.
Green Bay, Green Bay Tire Service
Kenosha, Kenosha General Tire Co., Inc.
Milwaukee, General Tires, Inc.
Rice Lake, Mathisen Tire Co.
Richland Center, Leyda Motors
Superior, Mathisen Tire Co.

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The Iron Box

By JOHN SAVAGE

Katona was a master magician. Escape was his business. Now he must escape this final prison. Now he must escape his own grave

THE box was made of iron plates, welded together. It was two feet square and three feet tall. Empty, it weighed about eighty pounds. With Janos Katona inside and the lid bolted on, it probably weighed two hundred and fifty.

I first saw it in the lobby of a Paris theater. Later I saw it twice on the stage. Finally, in what I thought was a publicity stunt, I saw it thrown into the river Seine by a group of Katona's admirers. I never saw it again.

Those are the main facts of the matter, and yet they leave out almost everything. The story of Janos Katona—the finest and most truly dedicated man I've ever met—deserves to be known on the American side of the ocean. I think I should be the one to tell it, because Katona and his iron box changed my whole life.

I was twenty-four years old that November. Except for a very bad conscience, which had been my companion ever since I had quit my New York job, I was alone in Paris. The first Katona poster I saw was on a newspaper kiosk near the Madeleine at seven o'clock one evening.

I have always been a sucker for any kind of magician or escape artist. This one was billed as *Katona, l'incroyable,* which means "Katona, you wouldn't believe it." I was prepared to believe it, all right. I was, and still am, the perfect audience for all performers of that kind; I am a man who takes a childish delight in everything they do, tries his damnedest to find out how they do it, and never succeeds.

I immediately started walking toward the theater, and I paused only once. The pause came when I saw my second Katona poster. It was on another kiosk, about two thirds of the way to the theater. This poster was like the first, except that it had been defaced in a very significant way. Somebody, working fast, had splashed across it in red paint. The word was *paix*.

I knew about the special meaning of that word. You couldn't spend much time in Europe without learning about it, and you were always seeing it painted on a bridge or a wall somewhere. In Italy you saw *pace,* and in Germany it was *Friede,* but everywhere it was a motto of the Communists. It had once been a well-loved word meaning simply "peace," but the Communists had captured it and taught it new tricks.

Here and now, splashed diagonally across Katona's name, the word did not mean "peace." It meant something like "down with the enemies of Communism," and its message was perfectly clear. Every passer-by would learn what I was learning—that this man Katona was hated by the Reds.

I absorbed the message with interest and then walked on toward the theater. There had been a time when the conquest of "peace" by the word-twisters was capable of making me fighting mad, but that time was past. I had come a long way, or thought I had, since the days when I hoped to do something about the mess the world was in.

I arrived at the theater ten minutes early, still wondering idly how an innocent escape artist could have got the Communists mad at him. As soon as I entered the lobby, though, I turned my mind to more fascinating matters.

The display in the lobby that night included many objects besides the iron box. There were two strait jackets, a heavy steamer trunk, a cluster of handcuffs, and various other devices that Professor Katona proposed to escape from, for the entertainment and mystification of the public. I set about examining all these exhibits carefully, and so did several other customers who had come in just ahead of me.

I saved the iron box until the last, because it appealed to me most. A steamer trunk might easily be rigged with a panel that opened inward at the touch of a hidden spring. A strait jacket could be unbuckled, by a trained contortionist, through the canvas. Cheap handcuffs would pop open if you banged them on something, and many better cuffs would be unlocked with a looped shoelace. But a simple metal box without upholstery, without any rivets, phony or otherwise . . .

I STOOD in front of the box and looked at it. It was empty; the big square lid was on the floor nearby. The box had once been painted white, inside and out, but apparently not for the purpose of hiding anything. There were, in fact, several irregular spots where the paint was scaling off and the rust was working. From each of these areas a long, orange-red stain ran downward on the white surface.

I hit the side of the box a few times with the heel of my hand, and each time there was a muffled boom. The box sounded very solid. I quickly turned my attention to the lid and the fastenings.

The lid, which was also painted white, lay upside down on the floor. It was a two-foot square of sheet iron with sides about three inches tall all the way around. I picked it up, turned it over and fitted it onto the box. It slid snugly down over the open end like the cover on a can of tea.

It was only after the lid was on that I noticed the holes. There were two of them, and they were drilled through opposite side walls of the lid. They went right on through the walls of the box itself. Any kind of rod, stuck through the holes, would secure the lid.

I took the lid off and put it back on the floor. I was now being watched politely by an old Frenchman in overcoat, muffler and beret, and also by his wife. They seemed to think I was part of the show. I grinned at them and went on with my investigation. I was having so much fun that I even forgot my nagging conscience.

I was absolutely satisfied with the box and the lid. I figured the trick for escaping must lie in some hidden weakness of the bolts and locks that held the two together. I therefore spent the rest of the time before the show in examining the bolts and locks, and in studying the drawing that showed how they worked.

The drawing was in an oak frame, leaning against the box. It showed a cutaway view, with a man in the box and the fastening in place. The lid was held down, at opposite sides, by two bolts. The

Wearing a sweater and dungarees, Katona climbed into the iron box. Today, there were plenty of eager hands helping to put the lid on

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT FAWCETT

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heads of these bolts were inside the box, and the shaft of them ran out through the holes that were drilled through the side walls of the box and the side walls of the cover. Instead of a nut on the outside end of each bolt, there was a hole drilled through the bolt itself. Through each hole was passed the hasp of a sizable padlock. A man locked in the box had nothing to attack but the smooth heads of the bolts. What could he do?

He could unscrew the heads of the bolts, I said to myself. He could use trick bolts, with heads that would unscrew. Sure. And when the heads were off, he could simply push the headless bolts on out.

The bolts, with their locks, were on the floor beside the drawing. Several other people had joined the old Frenchman and his wife in watching me, but I didn't care. I started trying to unscrew the heads of the bolts.

I was still trying five minutes later, when the warning buzzer sounded several times.

I walked on in and sat down, followed by my own small audience. My hands were sore from trying to twist the boltheads, but I was feeling stubbornly sure of my theory. I smiled and said to myself: They'll switch bolts before the show.

THE surprises of that evening, though it was nearly a month ago and in another country, are still vivid in my memory as I write. The biggest surprise, even before I learned the whole truth about him, was Janos Katona himself—first his humor and lack of bombast, later his consummate skill.

He came out on the bare stage, alone, and stood there smiling modestly while the audience gave him a round of applause. I judged that he was just under forty years old. He was a blond man of medium size with extremely powerful shoulders. He wore a black suit and a bow tie.

As soon as the applause died down, he made an extraordinary speech, in heavily accented French. I had expected the accent, in view of his Hungarian name, but I had not expected the content of the speech.

"I am only an imitator," he began. "You will see nothing tonight that has not been done better before, even by men who were also imitators." He smiled ruefully, and I could feel his audience warming up to him, although his sincere modesty was not what I would have thought of as good showmanship. "If any of my little *divertissements* should give you pleasure," he went on, "please remember that your pleasure comes not from me but from a great man who died many years ago. This was the American, Ehrich Weiss, known to the world as Houdini."

The audience clapped again, and Katona—with Houdini off his chest—started doing his stuff. Within two minutes I was in the act myself.

An escape act is a curious thing, and the heart and soul of it is showmanship. The build-up has to be superb, because the best escapes are made behind a screen of some kind, to protect the secret. The climax of the act takes place where the audience can't even see it.

Houdini, they say, could hold a theaterful in eager suspense for an hour or more while he worked himself out of some elaborate pickle, within the four walls of a portable screen. But I hadn't thought, until I saw Katona, that anybody else could create that kind of interest.

He began by asking for a committee of five men from the audience, much as Houdini used to do. Although I am not an exhibitionist by nature, I was on the stage in ten seconds. I wanted to know, above all, about the iron-box trick. I wanted to check those bolts.

The first of the committee's duties was to help the magician carry his equipment from the lobby to the stage. Apparently Katona worked without an assistant. The band played while we made the trip to the lobby and back, and I got several close looks at Katona's face. It was a long, strong, likable face, with a lot of experience in it.

As soon as we got back on the stage and got things arranged, Katona began a series of stunts, most of which I'd seen before. He let the five-man committee stay on the stage, to prove he had nothing to hide. We sat in straight of watchfulness in his eyes. I suddenly remembered the messed-up poster outside, and realized something I'd been forgetting: Katona was a man who had powerful enemies. It must take a fair amount of courage for him to let himself be rendered helpless by strangers, even here in the theater.

He smiled, though, and proceeded to order something I had never seen done before. He had us hang him upside down by the ankles, from a rope that ran over a pulley in the flies. Three of us got on the free end of the rope and hauled until Katona hung, head downward, two yards off the floor. Then he asked us to start him swinging from side to side, and we did. He kept shouting for more until we had him going in a long arc, the whole width of the stage.

I had read somewhere about the

COLLIER'S "It's easy to see who wears the pants in *that* family" VIRGIL PARTCH

chairs, all on one side of the stage, and watched him run through some preliminary sleights of hand. The escapes, since they were the main dish, would come later.

He swallowed a handful of needles and a ball of thread, then pulled the thread out of his mouth with the needles strung on it; he did some card tricks; he made a rosebush grow and blossom out of an empty flowerpot. All this was done rather apologetically, but it was expert work and quite convincing.

I enjoyed these things, along with the rest of the audience, but I was waiting somewhat impatiently for the escape from the iron box. It had occurred to me by now that he might use imitation padlocks made of sponge rubber; then he could pull the bolts in through the holes, locks and all. I resolved to be one of the committeemen who locked him in. I'd find out for sure.

WHEN he finally got to the escapes, he began with the strait jacket. All the members of the committee helped get it on him. He had taken off his coat first, so that we could get the leather-and-canvas contraption on tighter. We buckled the jacket up the back, then made him cross his arms on his chest while we buckled the ends of the sleeves together, also in back. We hauled everything perfectly taut, and when we were finished it was a wonder that Katona could even breathe.

He stood before us for a moment, and I thought I caught a certain look strait-jacket work of Houdini himself. He always claimed that this particular escape was a matter of "persistent straining" by a man with a well-trained body; not a secret trick at all, in other words, but something that could be done in full view of the audience.

I had carefully inspected Katona's strait jacket. I had checked especially for hidden springs or releases inside the ends of the sleeves. I knew there weren't any.

Still swinging in that long arc, Katona gradually pulled one elbow over his head, wriggled the jacket around on his body, unbuckled the sleeve straps with his teeth, and then unbuckled the jacket straps with his hands, working through the canvas. He dropped the jacket on the floor after about a minute and a half. Then he jackknifed his body, untied his own ankles and swung off the rope. He hit the stage standing up, and the crowd went crazy.

The handcuff act which followed was also impressive, and so was the escape from the steamer trunk. But I was getting a little impatient for the iron-box performance. My chief interest in the steamer-trunk escape came from the prospect of seeing what type of screen Katona would use.

The screen turned out to be a steel frame, six feet square, with blue drapes that hung down to the floor on all four sides. The frame was on wheels, so that it could be rolled into place. After we had Katona locked in the trunk and the trunk bound securely with rope, according to the instructions he had given, we rolled the screen over the trunk, hiding it from view. In less than a minute, Katona parted the curtains and stepped out. We rolled the screen away and found the trunk securely locked and tied.

This made an excellent act, but I'd heard of too many ways for getting out of a trunk: trap doors, trick hinges.

The iron box was next, though, and I began to get really excited. Only those who share my love of magic will know completely what I mean: the utter simplicity of the box, the complete perfection of the illusion!

We members of the committee, with the help of Janos Katona himself, cleared the stage of everything except the box. Then Katona invited the committee to make another inspection.

I jumped at the chance. I went straight to the bolts and tried to unscrew the heads, without success. I squeezed the locks and found them solid. If there was to be a switch of some kind, it hadn't been pulled yet. I gave the box and lid another quick check and was convinced that nothing had been changed.

Katona held his arms out and asked us to search him. All five of us took turns with the frisking, and nothing turned up. At first I wondered about the reason for the search. It was only after he had stepped into the box that I understood.

THIS was the way of it: Janos Katona stepped into the open box and folded himself into a sitting position, with the two bolts in his hands; his knees were almost against his chest. As soon as he was in, he pushed the bolts out through the two holes in the box, which were about on a level with the top of his head. He pushed the bolts only part of the way, so that they would not interfere with the lid as it slid past them. He kept his hands on the bolts, and as soon as we had slid the lid on, he pushed the bolts as far out as they would go, through the two holes.

As the committeemen snapped the padlocks through the holes in the ends of the bolts, my brain began to work on the only possibility I could see for escape: the bolts had not been switched while Katona was visible, but couldn't he have switched them after he was hidden by the lid?

No, I decided, not unless he could make time stand still. The bolts had shot out of both holes at once, the very instant the lid was all the way down. And where would the substitute bolts have come from, anyway? Five men had just searched him. I saw the reason for the search now, and I admired it. In insisting on that detail, Janos Katona had been shoring up the only weak spot in his illusion. All logical possibilities of escape had now been destroyed.

We rolled the screen over the box, as we had rolled it over the trunk. The folds of the blue cloth curtain dropped to the floor all the way around the box, hiding it completely.

The orchestra played very loudly for the next two minutes. I registered that fact as a suspicious detail, without knowing how to interpret it. In less than two minutes the blue curtains parted.

Katona stepped out, smiling rather humbly. He gave the screen a push, and it rolled away, revealing the iron box. The box was bolted and locked as it had been before.

The audience got to its feet and did a lot of clapping. I sat there, beating my hands together and trying to figure out the gimmick. When the applause was

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over, Katona allowed the committee to unlock the padlocks, push the bolts into the box and remove the lid. Everything was as before. With Katona smiling at me, I reached into the box, retrieved the bolts and tried to twist the heads off. No luck.

Katona then asked the audience, as Houdini used to do, if anybody had a challenge—any particularly difficult test he'd like to put the magician to. Nobody spoke up, so Katona did a couple of card tricks, dismissed the committee, and rang down the curtain.

THAT was Friday night. I went to my hotel as soon as the show was over, had a drink in the bar, and went to bed. I dreamed of being shut up in an iron box, a huge one, and I woke up in the morning knowing I'd have to find out more about that trick. Maybe if I went back to the theater that night, I'd get a chance to talk to the magician a little.

In that morning's Paris Herald, which I read at breakfast, I was delighted to find a feature story on the new sensation in town, Janos Katona. There was no specific mention of the iron box, though. Instead, there was a picture of Katona, looking very serious, and a brief account of what the paper called "the crowning escape of his career"—his trip from Communist Budapest to the American zone of Vienna six months before. It seemed he had not been popular with the political leaders on the other side of the Curtain. He had been engaged in a lot of anti-Soviet pamphleteering, and his escape from prison, while he was awaiting interrogation, was said to have vexed the authorities considerably.

Those same authorities, the story said, were angry at him for an additional reason: they believed that most of his theatrical income, even now, was being used to help finance anti-Communist elements in Hungary.

I found this very good reading, but I reminded myself that I had given up all interest in international affairs on the day I quit my job at United Nations headquarters in New York. All I wanted to know, I told myself, was how Katona got out of that confounded box.

I arrived at the theater about twenty minutes before curtain time that night and spent the twenty minutes investigating the box all over again. I got nowhere.

When the show started, I volunteered for the committee again. Katona did a slight double-take when he saw me, but he seemed pleased to be doing repeat business and readily agreed to allow me to serve.

While we were carrying the box from the lobby to the stage, he asked me a question: "You are American?"

I said, "Yes," and then I tried something. "I wonder if I could buy you a drink after the show?" I asked.

He grinned. "Not only an American, but a rich American! Hokay! Do you know La Petite Marmite?"

I said I did, and we agreed to meet there. It was a bar near the theater.

The show that night began with everything going off exactly as before. Things didn't begin to be different until after the iron-box trick, when Katona asked again for challenges from the audience.

This time a man stood up and shouted, "Yes! If you please, yes. *I* have a challenge!"

This man was far in the rear of the house. All I could tell about him was that his face, behind heavy spectacles and a gray mustache, was very white. Katona smiled at him and seemed to take a new interest in the proceedings. "Monsieur will have the goodness to state his challenge," he called. "My talents are, as will have been noted by all, severely limited. At the same time . . ." He paused and waited.

The man in the rear spoke again, rather stiffly, and in an accent that reminded me oddly of Katona's own. He ticked off each detail on his fingers. "Tomorrow, in the full light of day, on the Quai d'Orsay, *Monsieur le Professeur* will enter the iron box. The committee will secure the cover as before. The box will be carried by the committee to the water's edge." He paused. "It will be thrown into the Seine."

The man sat down. There was a gasp from the audience. This was followed by laughter from those who had not caught the desperate seriousness of the challenger's tone, and by shocked cries of *"Non!"* from those who had.

Katona was still smiling. That confident smile, along with the challenger's Hungarian accent, forced me to an obvious conclusion: the challenger was a friend. This was a put-up job, for publicity purposes.

"Is it your intention, monsieur," Katona called, "that I should attempt an underwater escape, in the manner of the incomparable Houdini?"

"This intention is obvious."

"Not quite obvious," Katona corrected politely. "I would enjoy making such an attempt, but"—and he paused—"it is my opinion that the box, alas, might float."

I did some quick figuring, and realized that he was right. Even with a man inside, the box would contain several cubic feet of air.

The challenger spoke again, rather acidly. "Weight it."

Katona thought for a moment and then nodded. "This solution is acceptable to me," he said. "I shall place lead weights in the box before I enter it."

The challenger said, *"D'accord!"* and nodded triumphantly.

Katona dismissed the committee. With a sure appreciation of climax and anticlimax, he omitted the card tricks of the night before. He simply said, "Until tomorrow, Quai d'Orsay, at ten."

The audience was almost too busy with buzzing speculations to give him a hand.

I WENT straight to La Petite Marmite. I wasn't sure Katona would remember the appointment, but he did. He joined me just as I was sitting down at a rear table. I introduced myself and then summoned the waiter. Katona ordered a *filtre*, and I ordered some of the Normandy applejack they call Calvados. There was a moment of silence, during which I happened to notice Katona's suit.

He had done a quick change since the show, and he was wearing a blue flannel suit that belonged in a rag bag. For a second I wondered why he couldn't afford new clothes, and then I remembered that his income was going to the Hungarian underground.

"I enjoyed your show," I said.

Katona nodded his thanks.

"I admired particularly the iron box."

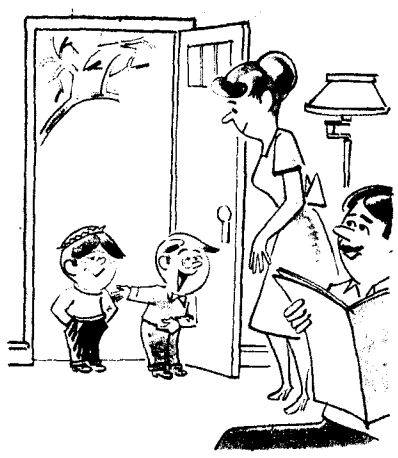
He smiled and said, "It is a very pretty restraint." Then he did what a magician will do every time—changed the subject. "You are American," he said. "I am curious about what you think of Hungary, my country, and its present government."

I wasn't looking for an argument. I said. "Oh, it's all right, if that's what they want."

"Yes," he said. "My father, a vintner

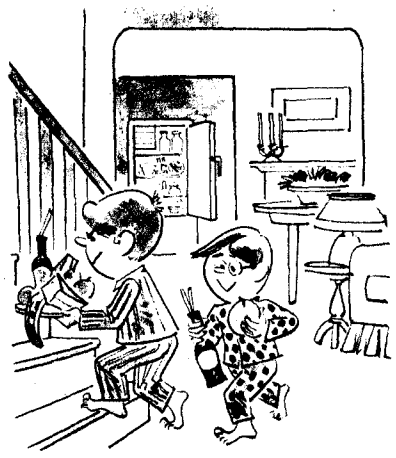
HOUSE GUEST

By STANLEY and JANICE BERENSTAIN



CHECKING IN

AMERICAN PLAN



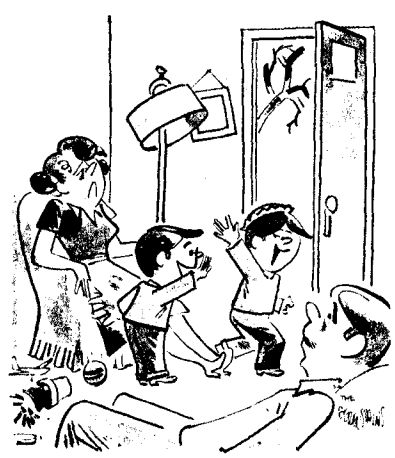
ROOM SERVICE

HOUSE DETECTIVE

HOT AND COLD RUNNING WATER

MAID SERVICE

BREAKFAST MENU



CHECKING OUT

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of the north shore of Lake Balaton, was deported in nineteen fifty to Russia. It was not what he wanted."

I made a sympathetic noise. I couldn't think of anything to say, and there was an uncomfortable silence. "Did you ever meet Houdini?" I asked.

He shook his head and then said, rather absently, "My grandfather knew a Rabbi Weiss, of Budapest, before the rabbi emigrated to your Wisconsin. This man became Houdini's father. *Et voilà* my closest link with Houdini."

"Oh. Well, I suppose you've read Houdini's books, though?"

Katona said, "Yes," and then: "Are you enjoying your visit to Paris?"

I took the hint, unwillingly, and got off magic. I had another Calvados, and this time Katona joined me. As the conversation went on, we had more drinks, and I may have grown a little talkative. I told him why I was in Paris. I told him about chucking my little job with the UN in New York. Secretary to a secretary. I'd gone into the job with a lot of childish hopes for world peace, but the closer I studied the trend of international events the quicker my hopes petered out. After a couple of years at it, I had quit and come to Paris to have some fun before the roof fell in. If my conscience didn't like it, my conscience could go to blazes.

Katona listened to me with sincere interest, almost a personal concern. A couple of times he almost spoke, then clamped his jaw shut; I got the idea he was resisting a fervent desire to give me a lecture. But he must have realized that words wouldn't do any good. When I had it all said, he didn't offer any sirupy advice. He just said, "I wish you luck."

"Good luck yourself," I said, as he stood up to leave. "That job tomorrow morning sounds dangerous."

He said, "I carry insurance."

It was quite a while before I found out what kind of insurance he meant.

I WAS on the Quai d'Orsay an hour early the next morning. People from the audience of the night before, along with their friends, were already beginning to gather. Katona rode up at five minutes to ten, seated beside the driver of a horse-drawn wagon. His iron box was on the bed of the cart. Pasted to the side of the box was one of the white posters I had already seen, with its *Katona, l'incroyable* in large letters. He had the driver stop the cart at the head of the stairway that ran down to the lower quay, and several men from the audience carried the box down the stairs for him. They set it down on the square paving stones, about a foot from the water's edge.

There were two old men sitting at the river's edge, fishing in the cool, green water. They had bamboo poles about fifteen feet long. They noted our preparations with small curiosity and no resentment; for centuries, the fishing in the Seine has been so superlatively bad that nothing can make it worse.

There were by now several hundred spectators. Almost as soon as the box had been set down, a gendarme pushed his way through the crowd. For a minute I was worried. Then I noticed that he was one of those policemen who are very stern of word and amazingly friendly of face; there are lots like him in Paris. He faced Katona and said, "Whatever this is, it is forbidden."

Katona outlined politely what was going on, and said it would take only a few minutes.

The gendarme nodded sagely and scratched his nose. "It is, as I have notified you, quite specifically forbidden," he said. "I shall return in three hours to arrest you, if you are still here." Then he walked away. I saw him stop under a horse-chestnut tree forty yards up the river to watch the rest of the proceedings.

Katona, wearing an old sweater and dungarees, passed two pigs of lead around for inspection and then placed them in the bottom of the box. He climbed in. I had already had my fill, at the night performances, of twisting on perfectly legitimate boltheads, and today there were plenty of eager hands helping to put the lid on, so I kept out of the way.

When the lid was on and the padlocks were locked through the ends of the bolts, somebody rapped on the box and asked Katona if he were ready.

COLLIER'S "Why don't we just fight it out like civilized people?" JERRY MARCUS

His voice came faintly from inside, muffled but gay. *"Allez-y!"*

Four men picked up the box, holding it level, and swung it back and forth three times. On the third forward swing they let go, and the box hit the water with a great splash. It disappeared at once, although a series of bubbles continued to rise to the surface and break.

A minute went by, two minutes. The white poster, torn from the box by the water, rose like a ghost toward the surface, flapping downstream on the slow current. *Katona, l'incroyable.* Three minutes. Four . . .

The bubbles stopped.

I stood there looking at the water, knowing only that something had gone wrong.

I KNOW a great deal more now—more about Janos Katona and his trick, and everything about what went wrong. At least I think I do.

I'd like to tell it all, exactly as I think it happened, from the moment he stepped into the box. Then I will tell how I found out.

When Katona stepped into the iron box, there on the quay, he expected no trouble. He thought he would be out of the river and taking a bow within a minute and a half. He had performed the same escape at least two hundred times on the stage, and three times, for publicity, on the bottom of the Danube River at Budapest.

Sitting there in the open box, he probably thought of it as a fortunate coincidence that the unknown challenger of last night had chanced on a trick which was so well practiced. Working without an assistant, as he had been forced to do since coming to Paris, caused difficulties enough, even with these standard escapes.

Now they were preparing to put the lid on. He had to be ready.

AS SOON as the lid reached the top of the box and started sliding down, Katona performed a piece of manual dexterity that had cost him many hours of practice, even after a lifetime as a sleight-of-hand expert. It all had to be accomplished in somewhat less than one second—that was the time it took for the lid to slide all the way down.

There were three separate motions in the trick, and they had to be linked together into something smooth, unhurried, and yet lightning fast.

His hands were already on the bolts. The first motion was that of withdrawing the bolts and dropping them in his lap without a clatter. The second was harder, because the fake bolts were in a satin sheath, taped to the skin at the back of his left knee. His hands had to swing up under his pant leg and withdraw the bolts. The third motion, which took place just at the instant the lid finished sliding into place, was an accurate, ambidextrous stab with the substitute bolts at the two circles of light that were the holes.

All this he did quite successfully, as he had done it so many times before. He sat in the dark then and heard the locks click in the bolts. Somebody outside called to ask if he were ready, and he answered, *"Allez-y!"*

He felt the motion as the box was raised from the pavement, and he braced his hands, feet and shoulders for the jar. It was not a bad jar.

He heard the splash, followed by the whisper of water sliding upward past him. Then he felt another jar as the box hit bottom. The weights had kept it upright, and the current wasn't strong enough to tip it over; that made things simpler.

He went to work immediately, in the rapidly cooling dark, hearing the rustle of air leaking out around the lid and through the holes, and the murmur of water leaking in. He pulled the bolts inward half an inch, which was as far as they would come, and then went to work at unscrewing the one on his left. It seemed to be starting hard. He held the bolt shaft between finger and thumb of his left hand, twisting the head sharply with his right. He'd have to use a little oil before he tried this particular escape again. He twisted again, grunting with the effort.

The head wasn't going to unscrew at all!

In bewilderment, he attacked the other bolt. But he knew already what must have happened: somehow, in some way that he could not yet understand, the bolts had got switched.

The water in the box was over his shoe tops already. There wasn't much time, but he had to know the full gravity of the situation before he could do anything about it. He picked up one of the bolts that were in his lap and twisted the head. It unscrewed.

Janos Katona took one frugal, shallow breath of the already-stuffy air in the box and tried to get a grip on himself. Houdini had credited half his success to coolness in emergencies, and Katona had learned that lesson well.

Even as he set to work again, his mind was coolly taking stock of his weapons for survival: he had what he called his "insurance," in its pouch taped behind his right knee; he also had an ability, almost approaching Houdini's, to conserve oxygen. Perhaps, with these advantages, he still had a chance.

HIS insurance was now ripped loose and lying in his lap. It was a satin pouch full of miniature tools, and he had last used it in his escape from the interrogation cell in Budapest. It contained three kinds of picks for opening locks, a shortened screw driver, a four-inch piece of hacksaw blade, and a capsule of potassium cyanide. The poison was for the most irrevocable escape of all, and there had been times in his eventful life when he had come within a hair's breadth of having to use it.

The darkness was total, but his finger tips knew the saw blade well. He was at work on the shaft of one of the bolts almost before he had thought about it.

But the hopelessness of his position struck him like a club, as soon as the saw blade began taking its pitifully small bites of steel. It was like working on flint with a nail file, and he was now sitting in water a foot deep.

He pushed the hopelessness away with an effort of self-hypnotism. He had now been on the bottom of the river for approximately two minutes. There must be no panic, because panic would speed the heart and cost more oxygen. Letting his hands work on, he deliberately put his mind to the problem of how the bolts had been switched.

He remembered something now. He had had a slight surprise earlier this morning when he had awakened to find the door of his hotel room open. There had been a further moment of puzzlement when the watchman at the theater had reported almost catching an intruder in the night. But nothing had been missing or harmed at either place, and he hadn't put the two incidents together in his mind until now.

They came together in a flash at this moment, when it was too late—with the water cold about his chest and with his saw blade only beginning to scratch a channel in the steel.

Only one man knew enough to do this to him, and that man's name was Tisza. Tisza had been jealous, even in

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the old days, when he had worked as Katona's assistant on the stage in Hungary; and his political views had differed sharply from Katona's own.

Tisza would know how to assassinate a man without making a martyr of him. Tisza would know how the iron-box trick worked and where both sets of bolts were kept. Tisza was no mean magician himself and could walk softly. Tisza could disguise himself with mustache and glasses, for a murderous evening at the theater.

"At least I am regarded as worth assassinating," Katona noted, and his lips smiled as his hands worked.

THE blade was only about one quarter of the way through the bolt—the first of *two* bolts—and the water was already at his shoulders.

He remembered checking the contents of the satin sheath as he was taping it on his leg this morning, but he had checked carelessly, and only by feel. After all, the bolts were *there;* why should he suspect that they were not the right ones? Well, he would never be careless again. Or careful again, for that matter, he realized. Or alive again. But he kept the saw going.

He thought about Hungary, the free Hungary he had worked for.

When the water reached his chin, he took one great breath of nearly worthless air and then began letting it out of his nose, very slowly. He knew he was good for about two more minutes.

Always the saw kept going, still on the first of the bolts, and barely halfway through. It kept going for almost a minute more before hope died, and it stopped.

For an instant, Janos Katona sat very still. The box was full of water now, and empty of air. He could hear the measured throbbing of his own pulse in his ears, still without the speed of panic. If he prayed, the prayer was very brief.

Hope came back almost like a dream. It was a very tiny hope. Deliberately, Katona's hands groped for the screw driver, dropping the saw blade which was too slow a tool to be of further use. He raised the screw driver and attempted to use it as a lever to break the weakened bolt, but there seemed to be no way of getting a solid purchase. Then he thought of something. He passed the ringlike steel handle of the screw driver over the bolthead and let the screw driver hang from the shaft of the bolt. Then he picked up one of the faked bolts from his lap, set its end inside the ring of the screw driver handle, and pried upward against the bolthead. The sawed bolt broke off with a snap that hurt his ears.

Quickly he dropped his tools and pushed the headless bolt out through the hole. Then he ducked his head, got his shoulders against the lid of the box, and thrust his body upward.

The other bolt wouldn't break; he knew that. But with all the leverage of the cover working on it, it might bend.

He felt the cover move upward an inch, then jam. He heaved his shoulders against it again and forced it free. He wanted great gulps of air, but he forced himself to keep his mouth closed. He pushed again, felt the lid give some more, and then used one hand to measure the space between the lid and box, on the side where there was no bolt. It was enough! He could squeeze through! He did so and paddled weakly upward toward the light.

Still in his shoes were the two pieces of fishline, each five feet long, which he had planned to use as usual for pulling the original bolts out through the holes, so that he could lock the box as before. The refinements of the illusion were no longer important. The only important thing was air.

A moment later his head broke the surface of the Seine, and he breathed, sobbing, and heard the shouts of the crowd.

THAT is what happened. At least, that is how Katona told it to me in La Petite Marmite a few hours later. At the time, I found it impossible to doubt a single word of it.

He told me that something had inspired him during his ordeal, and that he therefore planned to return to Hungary, and the underground, immediately. He claimed to have learned two things on the bottom of the river. He had learned that he was regarded as an important enemy of the dictators, important enough to be assassinated. And he learned that nothing is impossible so long as there is hope, even a tiny hope.

He preached me this little sermon so well that I got all steamed up. I still am, and I guess I always will be. I'm back at my job with the UN, and though my hope for peace is small, it is steady and it is precious.

I'm almost sure that's the end of the story. But I'll admit that a friend of mine has just had a letter from Paris, and I'll tell you what it says. Katona is still there! He didn't go to Hungary. He's still in Paris, and still wowing them, just as if that underwater ordeal of his had never happened.

Now do you suppose it *didn't?* Do you suppose I've been bamboozled?

I still remember seeing Katona smile at me, on the stage that time, when I was trying to unscrew the bolt-heads. Did he take his cue from that theory of mine? Did he spin me a cloak-and-dagger yarn and hang a moral on it, just to send me back?

I'm happy; my conscience is my friend. But I can't help wondering. Could it be that I *still* haven't found the real gimmick for the iron-box trick? I don't know. I told you I was a sucker for a magician. ▲▲▲

"See these? They need refills"

COLLIER'S BRAD ANDERSON

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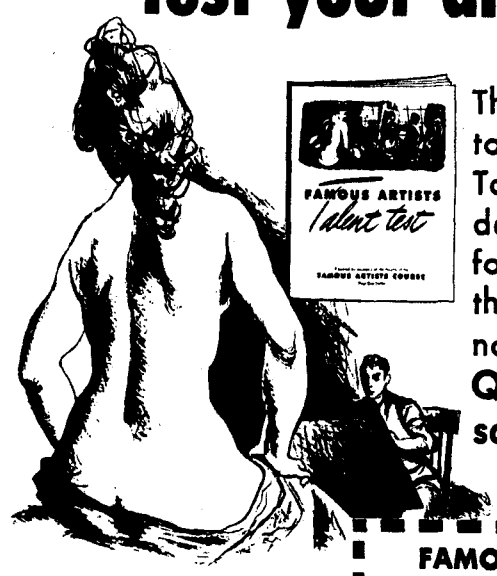

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Asa sets off on early-morning inspection of traps along Muddy Brook. Two-mile trek takes two hours

Trap is returned to stream after drowned muskrat has been removed. Fur coat requires 90 such pelts

Carrying dead muskrat, Asa hurries along trap line. State law requires sets to be inspected every day

Asa Sprague smooths fur on beaver pelt—worth $30. Drying muskrat skins ($2.50 each) hang behind him. He makes $100 a year on his upstate New York trap line

Collier's COLOR CAMERA

BOY TRAPPER

Asa Sprague is a teen-age businessman whose stock in trade is a vast woodland know-how. His partner is Mother Nature

ASA WILLIAM SPRAGUE is a seventeen-year-old farm boy. He has lived in the Catskill Mountains all his life. He is as far removed from the world of high fashion as a beaver in a pond is from a finished fur coat. Asa has, in fact, only the vaguest idea how a fur coat is made. But he knows the tumbling mountain streams and brooks near his family's 100-acre farm in upper New York State's Schoharie County. He knows where the fox will dig its burrow and where the otter makes its slide. He knows the mink's insatiable curiosity and how to take advantage of it. And though Asa might not recognize a sheared beaver coat on the street (for he has never seen one), he plays an indispensable role in producing one.

Asa is a before- and after-school trapper, a job that is to him what working in a drugstore is to many city kids—except perhaps that Asa works much harder. His co-worker in the enterprise is Nature, and Nature is an exacting partner. Asa is up two hours before dawn every morning of the trapping season. Regardless of the weather, he hustles along Muddy Brook to inspect his 75 traps. His muskrat sets are placed in the icy waters of the stream where Asa hopes the animals will step on them during the night. On a good morning, Asa will collect three muskrats. Some he finds drowned; others have chewed off their trapped legs and escaped. But most are still alive, and Asa kills them with a stick.

The muskrats are the bread-and-butter animals of Asa's trap line, selling for $2.50 a pelt. A mink, however, will bring six times that amount—but, correspondingly, they are easily six times more difficult to trap. The mink, though, does have a fatal weakness—inquisitiveness. And Asa makes full use of it. Wearing gloves to keep from leaving any human scent, he builds a tiny archway of rocks in a stream bed. After he has gone, the mink sniffs his way up to the little construction job (called a cubby). The animal's curiosity gets the better of him and he darts through. Day after day, the mink returns and repeats the procedure. Then one morning he goes through once too often. One of Asa's traps is under the arch.

Asa nets about $100 a year trapping. To earn it, the only risk he assumes—aside from the danger of frostbite—is a social one. On the mornings he removes a skunk from a trap, he invariably is relegated to a faraway seat at school. ▲▲▲

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY WILLIAM VANDIVERT

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Beaver trap is wired to Y-shaped elm limb with small aspen tree branch across crotch as bait. Whole set is shoved in water under ice. Trapped beaver drowns

Seeking possible new locations to set traps, Asa checks animal tracks in snow. A rabbit made these

Ready to douse captor with scent, a trapped skunk, tail high, stands poised for action. Asa shot it

To trap mink, Asa first builds rock archway, then leaves. Curious mink darts beneath. Asa later sets trap in place (above) to catch mink next time through

After-school chore is killing human scent on traps by boiling in solution of water and logwood chips

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HOW TO SMUGGLE A

It's a fine art for those larcenous souls who sneak across our frontiers with illega

ONE bitter January night in 1951 an Air Force sergeant was driving through the lonely hinterland beyond the town of Fort Kent, Maine. Suddenly his car skidded into the brush along the St. Johns River, which forms the border between the United States and Canada.

As he backed away from the tangled alders, the sergeant beheld a sight that made his jaw drop. Far out on the frozen river loomed a dozen shadowy creatures. They were silent as wraiths in the moonlight; and as they glided along they blew huge iridescent bubbles which floated ghostily on the still air.

Then a cloud covered the moon, and the apparitions vanished. So did the sergeant—at the rate of 60 miles an hour back toward his base at Presque Isle. There he made out a report and filed it with his captain. Under questioning, the sergeant insisted that he was sober and that what he had seen was no mirage. The doubting captain finally agreed to put customs officials on the trail of the bubbling phantoms.

The climax was like a scene out of Alice in Wonderland. Sliding and slipping through snowdrifts, two customs agents searched the river for hours. They encountered nothing but chilblains—and a series of bootprints apparently made by weaving drunks. Then, just as they were about to give up in disgust, they turned their binoculars on the Canadian shore.

There in the dawn's early light stood the explanation of the sergeant's phantoms—cows with galoshes on their feet and soapsuds on their faces. With them were two Canadian farmers, who—safe across the border from the customs agents—looked even more contented than the cows. The farmers had hit upon the happy device of using galoshes to mask the cows' hoofprints and soap to distract them from mooing. (Soap, it should be explained, is a tasty treat to cows.) And the farmers had thus smuggled the rest of the herd into Maine in relays all night.

The incident became known as the Case of the Bubbling Bossies. But it was just a ripple in the wave of cattle smuggling that is swamping understaffed U.S. officials. In the past 10 years, at least $12,000,000 worth of beefsteak and butter on the hoof has been slipped past guards on the Canadian and Mexican borders. The smuggled cattle, if legally imported, would have brought the United States $600,000 in customs duties. And the slick business is on the upgrade.

Cattle smugglers find a ready market in this country because of heavy demand and high prices—the result of inadequate home production and a law barring importation of cattle from any nation afflicted with foot-and-mouth disease. Spread by a virus, foot-and-mouth disease is the most contagious and devastating animal disease known to science. It attacks all cloven-hoofed creatures, and there is no way to control the plague except by destroying the stricken animal, its companions in the herd, and every bit of hay, grain and feed they have touched.

The last outbreak in this country occurred in 1929. Since then only a few nations, provably free of the plague, have been allowed to ship livestock into the United States. At present they include Australia, New Zealand, Greenland, Iceland, Cuba and the Central American republics.

However, a sea voyage swells the cost of cattle. Therefore, Americans have traditionally relied on nearby Mexico and Canada for the bulk of their imports. But an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Mexico in 1946 shut out all Mexican cattle for six years, our government finally lifting the ban only last September. However, Mexico still restricts the export of its dairy cows. To add to the shortage, Canadian cattle have been barred from the United States since last February, when a foot-and-mouth plague struck Saskatchewan. All these circumstances have led to a further upsurge in smuggling on both borders.

Smuggling is particularly rife in New England, which depends on Quebec and Ontario to replenish its dairy herds. Cut off from this source of supply by the foot-and-mouth-disease embargo, Yankee farmers pay as much as $500 for a milk cow from Canada—with no questions asked. As Chester A. Emerick, Deputy Commissioner of Customs Investigations, points out: "The setup is perfect for smugglers. They can buy a cow in Canada and sell it for five times as much in the States."

Unguarded Trails Across the Border

The terrain also is ideal for smuggling. It stretches for hundreds of miles over lonely pasture land and tangled second-growth forest. Only the main highways are guarded. But snaking back and forth across the border are innumerable lumber roads, wagon trails and footpaths which appear on no map. Smugglers shuttle cattle down these byways by the ton. Their skill is such that not more than one smuggler in ten is apprehended. "There seem to be more recipes for smuggling a cow than there are for beef stew," one weary customs agent says.

Typical is the plot cooked up last March by a band of canny Vermonters. It started when Leo Bergeron, of Newport, and William Desbiens, of Coventry, went to eastern Ontario, picked up 18 cows, and hit the trail homeward. The journey covered 100 miles as the crow flies, but the cows and the men walked even farther.

Plodding along steadily with the cattle, Bergeron and Desbiens crossed Ontario into Quebec and

The Case of the Bubbling Bossies—two Canadian smugglers fed cows soap to muffle their moos and buckled galoshes on their hoofs to mask thei

LOWELL HESS

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COW

By BEN MERSON

ivestock. Their tricks will surprise you

USDA PHOTO

Border patrolmen of the U.S. Bureau of Animal Industry study a map of Texas-Mexico frontier, which is still a hotbed of rustling and smuggling

headed down the west shore of Lake Memphremagog. Overtaken by a blinding snowstorm, the smugglers just strapped snowshoes on their feet and pushed on through the night.

Five miles from the international border, the cows became balky. One tumbled off a footbridge. Two others got stuck in a snowbank. They raised such a commotion that a nearby Canadian housewife thought her heifers were being stolen. She telephoned police, and a Mountie came galloping up to demand an explanation.

The smugglers were ready for him. Producing a legal bill of sale, they explained that they were delivering the cows to a Quebec farmer three miles away. They added that they would have to hurry because they were not sure of the road or how much longer they could keep the cows from becoming frozen beef.

Satisfied, the Mountie rode back toward his base. And there he might have stayed—if he had not suddenly begun to worry that the cattlemen might get lost in the storm.

Picking up their tracks, the Mountie followed the trail in the snow. The tracks led south, when they should have led west; he decided the men must be lost. Spurring his horse, the Mountie topped a hill. In the valley below was the border. And in the middle of the border stood a barn—with the entrance in Canada and the exit in Vermont. Bergeron and Desbiens were trying to get the cows inside. But the doors were stuck, and so were the smugglers.

The Mountie confiscated the cows and called American customs agents, who arrested the two men. The smugglers implicated Gerald D. Sloan, a Derby, Vermont, cattle dealer, and Melvin J. Dunn, whose farm straddles the border. All pleaded guilty, and confessed that Dunn's barn—located aptly enough at North Troy—was a Trojan horse for smuggling cows across the international line. The four men were fined a total of $8,500.

Luckily for the cows, they were seized on Canadian soil. If the cattle had stepped across the middle of the barn, they would have been doomed under America's foot-and-mouth-disease law. It decrees death for any Canadian cow which so much as puts one leg in the United States.

The law makes no exceptions, a fact which has given all concerned some exceptional headaches. Hundreds of farmers—both American and Canadian—own land that adjoins or straddles the border. Their cows, being illiterate, fail to heed the warning signs. So they wander back and forth—unless they are caught in the act by Bureau of Animal Industry inspectors. Then the cows either are shot dead on sight or hauled away for execution.

Killing of Stock Arouses Resentment

The BAI inspectors have no choice. But the cow killings have led to a surge of sullen resentment along the entire 3,000-mile Canadian border. In Vermont this mood has flared into open rebellion. Outside Holland, angry neighbors poured sand into the gas tank of a BAI man's truck to prevent him from confiscating cattle which had ambled across the line on a farm straddling the border.

At Franklin, a dozen Vermont farmers blocked the seizure of another herd by driving off border guards and threatening to overturn their truck. When the guards returned with reinforcements, the cattle had been spirited away.

Other farmers have filed suit against the government, threatened to shoot agents who shot their cows, and even renounced their American citizenship and moved to Canada.

Co-operation with the government is so rare that only one case is recorded in BAI archives in Washington. It stars Kenneth S. Foster, a cattleman of Fort Fairfield, Maine, whose farm adjoins the border. His land is strongly fenced. But it was no proof against the romantic urge of his bull, which bowled over the barbed wire and left for a honeymoon in Canada with two heifers that attracted its fancy.

Knowing the law—and the laws of bovine behavior—Foster grimly loaded his rifle and sat down in the pasture to wait. At ten o'clock that night, the bull strolled back, lovingly trailed by the heifers. Foster pulled the trigger three times, ending the honeymoon. Then, still obeying the letter of the law, he telephoned the news to Dr. E. L. Miller, Agriculture Department chief, at Houlton, Maine.

"Congratulations," said Dr. Miller. "Isn't there anything now we can do for you?"

"Sure," said Foster. "Call up my neighbor and tell him those two heifers I shot are his."

Along the Mexican border, the smuggling prob-

ootprints during illegal trek into the United States. Here one of the smugglers leads batch of cows across the snow-covered border into Maine

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One North Dakota gang rustled and smuggled $750,000 worth of cattle in four years

lem is even more acute, for it is coupled with old-fashioned rustling. West Texas looks pretty much as it did in covered-wagon days. It is still the lonely land of sagebrush, mountains and ravines that make perfect hide-outs for cattle thieves. Roads are few, and only 200 customs men and BAI inspectors guard the 1,000-mile border formed by the Rio Grande.

Vast Herds South of Border

Across the river is the Mexican state of Chihuahua, where huge herds roam the open range and are counted only at roundup time. These cattle are the target of west Texas rustlers and the Rio Grande is no barrier. At most seasons, the river is just a muddy trickle, "too thin to plow and too thick to drink."

Fording the river on fast horses, rustlers make forays deep into Chihuahua, sometimes with the help of Mexican *vaqueros* (cowboys). Choice steers are cut off from the herds and driven over rocky trails to the border. Once across the river, the cattle are hidden in remote canyons.

There they are fed, fattened up and occasionally rebranded. Then the cattle are broken up into small lots and trucked to auction rings hundreds of miles away, where they will be sold to unsuspecting bidders.

While many thefts go undetected, others read like Hollywood Westerns. The latest of these thrillers (it has not gone to trial as this is written, so fictitious names are being used at the government's request) involves Miguel Gonzales, a Chihuahua rancher, who accidentally blundered into rustlers driving off 100 of his choice steers. Beating a hasty retreat, Gonzales summoned his *vaqueros*. They took up the trail, but lost it when the thieves headed over the mountains for the border.

The rancher reported the theft to American customs agents at Laredo, Texas. He said that he also had been robbed of 300 other steers during the past six months. He had assumed the rustlers were fellow Mexicans who had patriotically sold the cattle in Mexico. But now, he said, he suspected the thieves were Americans.

Customs agents shared that suspicion. They concentrated their investigation on a county across the Rio Grande from the mountains where the thieves disappeared. After weeks of fruitless search, they got their first lead from a BAI inspector. He said he had been patrolling the outskirts of a river ranch when he was suddenly stopped by the owner, an irascible Texan we shall call Jones. The rancher was carrying a carbine.

When the inspector asked him what he was hunting, Jones replied pointedly, "For people who don't mind their own business."

The next day, while patrolling the same area, a shot was fired at the inspector from the other side of the river.

Convinced they were on the right track, customs agents began looking for evidence to link Jones with the stolen Chihuahua steers. They found a truckman who said the gun-toting rancher had tried to hire him to haul 20 head to an auction ring. "But I turned down the job after I heard a drunken Mexican *vaquero* say the cattle were hot," the truckman explained. "The *vaquero* claimed he'd seen 'em swiped, but had kept quiet because he was afraid of Jones."

That tip cracked the case. Agents arrested a cattle dealer who confessed he was in cahoots with Jones. And, one by one, the steers were rounded up, although some had been shipped as far as Colorado and Kansas and had changed hands a dozen times.

What customs officials needed to wind up the case was the testimony of the Mexican *vaquero* who said he had witnessed the theft of the cattle. But he had long since returned to Chihuahua. Two agents set out to find him. Drifting from village to village in Mexico, they encountered only shrugs and tamales. Their quarry was always one jump ahead of them. Then suddenly one day he popped out from behind a clump of cacti as the agents were riding by.

"Welcome, *amigos*," he greeted. "You have come a long way—to die."

The agents turned, and found themselves staring into the muzzles of two rifles and a submachine gun aimed by three beady-eyed marksmen.

"These are my friends," explained the Mexican politely. "When they heard you wished to kidnap me and take me to Texas they decided they should kill you." He shrugged. "Have you any last words?"

The agents had quite a few. In a 15-minute oration, they pointed out that they had come unarmed, had no intention of kidnaping the *vaquero*, and had made their arduous journey in the role of diplomatic couriers. "We have come merely to invite you to Texas," they solemnly assured him.

"An invitation?" the *vaquero* was overwhelmed. "All this way you have come to bring me an invitation!"

The agents nodded reproachfully.

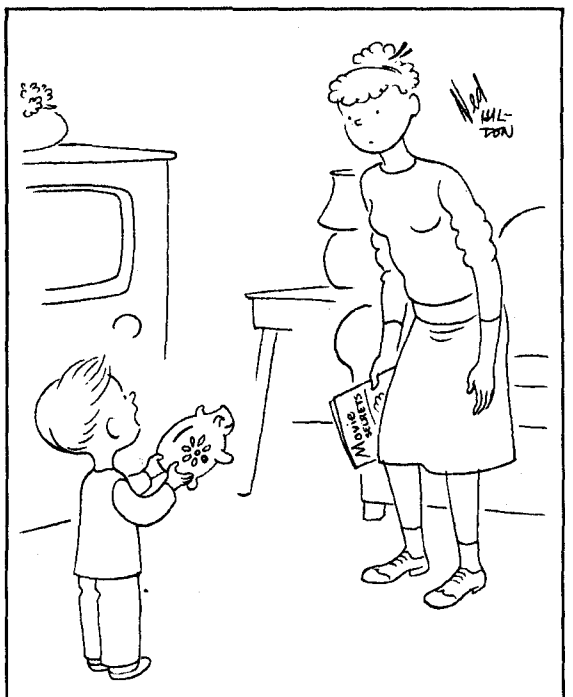
"And I treat you like this!" The Mexican looked conscience-stricken. "Can you forgive me? Can you forgive me enough to take me back to Texas with you now?"

The agents said they could, if he would get his friends to point their guns elsewhere.

"Bah," sneered the Mexican. "My friends' guns—they are not loaded. So let us boldly depart."

Jones and his confederates, including the cattle dealer, were indicted on charges ranging from smuggling to avoiding customs duties.

Although most cows which cross the Texas border illegally do so on their own four feet, others are smuggled in piecemeal. Agents at official ports of entry are constantly stopping tourists with steaks in their hats and coats, or suspended from hangers in their luggage. Customs agents seized one motorist who had trained his bulldog to snap at customs men instead of the 154 pounds of beef he had hidden in the car's upholstery. Periodically agents halt drivers who have spare gas tanks hidden under their hoods—and steaks hidden in their regular gas tanks.



"I can give you *two* dollars an hour to let me stay up"

COLLIER'S NED HILTON

Then there was a sixteen-year-old cyclist who used to pedal back and forth daily over the bridge between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso. Inspectors always thought he looked a bit paunchy. But they never stopped him until one day last April, when he came waddling back with his stomach almost protruding over the handlebars. Search revealed that he had 15 pounds of meat wrapped around his middle—and the meat had slipped, giving him a corporate bulge entirely out of keeping with his age. "Now you'll have to find me a new job," grumbled the youngster.

The youth had been employed as a smuggler by an El Paso restaurant. In 11 months he had toted three and a half tons of meat across the border on his bicycle—enough to feed 14,000 customers. The boy got off scot-free. His father and three partners in the restaurant drew four-month jail sentences, but these were suspended. The three restaurant men also were fined a total of $6,000.

A Mastermind in North Dakota

However, it was North Dakota which furnished the backdrop for the most spectacular gang of rustlers and smugglers in recent years. Masterminded by six-foot four-inch Frank Barker, who had a face like Abraham Lincoln and a mind like an adding machine, the mob made off with $750,000 worth of cattle in four years during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Barker's rustlers stole cattle on the Dakota border and sold them in Canada. Then, on the return journey, they stole cattle in Canada and sold them in Dakota.

Divided into a dozen groups of five men each, the gang terrorized the entire western half of North Dakota, striking in a dozen different places at once. In Mercer County, south of Barker's own ranch in Bottineau, they slaughtered the steers on the spot, buried the hides with their telltale brand, and boldly sold the fresh meat to butchers. In other counties, they rebranded the cattle and sold them on the hoof. Or, if the market were glutted, they hid the steers in the petrified forests and grotesque valleys of North Dakota's Bad Lands. Then, when prices boomed, they rushed their loot by truck to unscrupulous dealers in Iowa, Illinois and Ohio.

The cunning Barker never joined in the raids. Posing as a fish dealer, he traveled throughout North Dakota, Alberta and Saskatchewan, casting about for cattle his rustlers could hook—and in his spare time heading up a separate ring of wool smugglers. Authorities were completely confused. They believed the cattle thefts were the work of individual gangs, not an organized mob. At first, they didn't connect Barker with the rustling, even after they jailed him for wool smuggling (the result of a slight error by a truckman, who delivered the wool to a legitimate dealer).

During Barker's imprisonment, the cattle thefts increased. He smuggled out instructions from his jail cell to two trusted lieutenants. And with more time on his hands (his sentence for wool smuggling was 15 months), he made every moment count. Under Barker's goading, the gang added faster trucks and rolling slaughterhouses to their equipment, and even branched out into horse stealing and sheep rustling.

Up Against a Wall of Silence

Outraged by their huge losses, the North Dakota Stockmen's Association called on local, state, federal and Canadian officials to join in a concerted investigation. A year later, the first suspects were arrested. But they refused to talk; they feared Barker more than the law. Despite the most adroit questioning, they would not admit so much as their names. As one sheriff recalls, "We kept butting our heads against a wall of silence."

The climax came when a cowboy, caught stealing a calf, refused even to admit the animal had four feet. Exasperated, officials sent for truth serum and a lie detector.

That combination did it. Wired for sound and his inhibitions dissolved, the cowboy talked as if he had been vaccinated with a phonograph needle. He not only identified Barker as the ringleader, but implicated half a dozen other members of the gang. Confronted with this confession, the other suspects confessed, too, causing a chain reaction which resulted in 50 arrests. The members of the gang all had been guilty of scores of other crimes—ranging from arson and embezzlement to manslaughter—and Barker had used this knowledge to blackmail them. Barker was convicted of smuggling and rustling, and died in 1942 while serving a two- to five-year term in State's Prison.

In pioneer days, Barker might have wound up at the end of a rope. But with the passing of the vigilantes, cowcadging has become a comparatively safe occupation. Not more than one thief in ten is caught. And even if caught, the man who purloins a sirloin usually gets off with a fine easily payable out of his smuggling profits.

The high price of beef and dairy products plays into the smuggler's hands. If and when prices fall, smuggling will become unprofitable. Then the natural law of supply and demand will accomplish what man's law has failed to do—stop cattle smuggling. ▲▲▲

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I find myself heaving huge stacks of old newspapers aboard a truck at dawn

Let's Appoint a Committee!

By JOHN I. KEASLER

If you get stuck with all the work—and who hasn't?—read this

I HAVE scanned the miracle drug counter of my local drugstore repeatedly, seeking a cure for a mysterious malady which affects me chronically. I have committeeitis.

This malady broke out first at the age of nine when, completely against my will, I was appointed to the Trailblazing and Moss-observing Committee of Cub Scout Pack 38, and came down promptly with a fascinating case of poison-oak-covered wasp bites. They cleared up, eventually, but my committeeitis didn't clear up. This ailment grows progressively worse with age.

No matter what organization I become involved with, I end up invariably as a member of the Program and Planning Committee for the Annual Fish Fry and Dance—Fun for All. Which means that I clean the halibut.

Or else I get enmeshed in the Special Fund-raising Events Committee and find myself heaving huge stacks of gravity-ridden old newspapers and magazines aboard a truck at dawn of a Sunday, while all sensible club members are sleeping through the All-Out Paper Drive.

I could go to any given club meeting and come out appointed as a member of a committee to check on delinquency in the Congo, forthwith. In a moment of desperation the other day, I decided the only cure for my trouble was to let my dues lapse in all organizations except Social Security, and become a hermit.

What brought things to a head was that telephone call from the president of the club out in my suburb.

"Say," he said, "what have you done about the ragweed situation?"

"What—the ragweed situation?" I mumbled.

"You're on the Ragweed and Pollen Committee, remember?" he said. "The committee we got up August before last, after all the hay fever complaints. Any progress?"

That did it. A man can take only so many committees. I confessed the ragweed situation seemed pretty well stalemated, and departed my office at a brisk canter toward the nearest travel agency to check for a hermitage with reasonable monthly rates.

I had spent a goodly part of the morning pricing spareribs and dill pickles, having been roped into the Food and Beverage Committee for the office picnic, so perhaps I was overwrought. At any rate, if I hadn't bumped into Charley Mittson, a fellow member of a local civic club, I probably would be the most antisocial hermit in my entire block today.

"Haven't seen you at meetings lately," Charley said, over a bruncheon of imported olives, very dry.

"And you won't," I said grimly. I confided in him.

Charley studied me intently. He leaned across the table and said in a low tone, "I may be able to help you."

"You mean—" I was too choked up to go on.

"I mean I can give you some trade secrets used by some of the leading noncommittee members in the nation," he said. "First, as a basic test, why are committees appointed?"

"Well," I said. "Some of—"

"Wrong," Charley said. "Committees are appointed so the board chairman or club president will have something to do when urgent business arises. He can't just sit there, you know."

"But why do I—"

"Quiet," Charley said. "That's your trouble now, you talk too much. For instance, remember the night the chair asked for suggestions on whether to repair the meetinghouse floor before or after the termites dropped us all into the cellar?"

"All I said was—" I began.

"That was too much," Charley said. "That's how you ended up on the Renovation Committee, better known as the crosscut-saw brigade. Rule one in staying off committees is never to open your mouth concerning any question. If you do, bingo! Automatically you're on the committee to fix it, whatever it is."

"But even when I stay perfectly quiet—"

"Simple silence is not enough," Charley said. "Sometimes you have to outsmart the chair. Seating arrangements are important. Try to sit behind a post. If you can't do that, second motions."

"Second motions?"

"Sure!" Charley said. "Whenever somebody moves to appoint a committee, you second the motion, loudly and boldly."

"Why?"

"Because when the president starts appointing the committee he will feel you've already done your share, somehow. Nobody ever appoints a motion-seconder to committees. I thought everybody knew that. Motion seconding is even as good as table moving."

"Gee!" I said. "You give me new confidence. What's table moving?"

"A last resort," Charley said wisely. "When all else fails, and pure instinct tells you that you can't avoid a committee that threatens, leap to your feet at the last possible second and say, 'I move we table this matter pending further study.' Works every time."

"Thanks a lot for these tips, Charley," I said, wringing his hand.

"Don't mention it," he said, with an airy wave. "I just hate to see committee trouble get a man down. Guess we'll be seeing you regularly at the club now?"

He made me promise to attend. I haven't had a chance yet to try out Charley's rules thoroughly, but I see no reason why they shouldn't work. Only one thing bothers me a trifle. Charley is the fellow who sat across the halibut tub from me last year, and I just learned he got himself appointed to the Attendance and All-out Membership Drive the day before I ran into him. ▲▲▲

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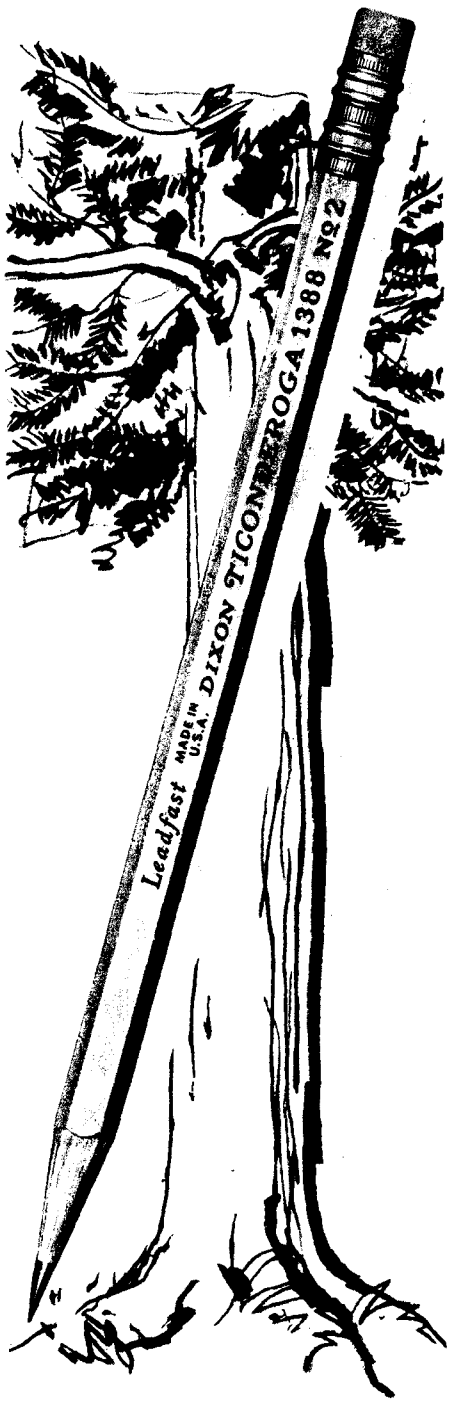

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Martin ran down the stairs to the main deck, across the plank to the cobblestones, and headed as fast as he could for Marberry Row

Martin Taylor's Enterprise

By MERLE CONSTINER

"Oh, it's an evil world," Aunt Bella said, and then she started putting ideas into Martin's head—ideas about the nefarious ways of river pirates, and why they might want Martin killed

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK McCARTHY

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nd Colonel Thomas. He only hoped that Colonel Thomas wa- still in his office

ON a blustery spring afternoon in 1851, Martin Taylor came out of the Cincinnati Land Agents Bank carrying a small black bag. He was twenty-two, dapper in slightly worn finery, apple-cheeked and energetic. Pearl Street was deserted except for a man at the curb, a big man, prosperous-looking, with a glossy mustache and a braid-decorated greatcoat. Somehow the man's hat jumped off and flew into Martin's arms; it was almost as though he'd knocked it off himself, clumsily, with his own sleeve. The man rushed up, thrust out a silver dollar, changed his mind and returned the coin to his pocket. "Won't insult you with filthy lucre," he said. "Eustachius Logan, ironmaster from Pennsylvania, at your service. May I stand you a glass of port?" His tiny eyes never left Martin's bag.

"I've got to be getting along," Martin said politely. "Busy day."

"Nice little valise you've got there."

"Thank you," Martin said.

"Full of gold, eh? I'll wager you're somebody's paymaster, eh?"

"It's full of cigars," Martin said. "Tanletter's Choice Superfines."

Mr. Logan began to tremble. "You're joking," he said hoarsely. "You stepped out of that bank. I saw you."

"I'm a tobacco salesman," Martin said. He didn't add that he was Cincinnati's worst, that he barely survived.

He stared. Could Mr. Logan be an act of Providence—like out of one of those penny paperbacks? Needy lad, on windy day, returns hat to benevolent stranger. Martin proffered his business card, that last, soiled card with a bent corner. Mr. Logan accepted it.

" 'Tanletter's Tobaccos for Personages of Refinement and Taste,' " Martin recited briskly. " 'Wholesale, retail. Select cigars of Spanish, Ohio and Kentucky leaf. Rappee; fine, scented maccaboy. Very best grade honeydew cut chewing. Lump tobacco, five to sixteen plugs to the pound.' "

He was alone, talking to the cobblestones.

Ironmaster Logan had turned on his varnished heel and was sauntering away, his greatcoat billowing behind him in the wind.

In the next three hours Martin made five deliveries, obtained a petty order for snuff and lost one more customer. He'd been averaging a loss of three customers a week, and his personal relations with Mr. Tanletter were strained.

The hideous and secret truth was that Martin didn't smoke, chew or take snuff. Tobacco did something violent to him, just as pork fat had done to his grandpa and ragweed to his cousin. The smoke from a burning cigar, for instance, made him lose control of himself completely. At six o'clock he went back to the factory.

THE building was of new brick, beefsteak red, and flush with the flagstone sidewalk. On the ground floor was a small retail shop, flanked by two doors, one leading back to the factory itself, the other ascending to the offices. Martin mounted the stairs. Below, work had stopped for the night, and the building was silent.

He came up into a barnlike room lighted by a dim lamp. Along one wall was a continuous counter, along which were spaced at intervals clerks' stools, inkpots and ledgers. The room was empty but for a girl in calico, sitting on Martin's stool. At her feet was a basket with a wooden lid. Polly Hopkins was her name, and she was a street-and-office vendor of confections. As Martin came in, she asked, "Any today?"

Martin said, "One. Mr. Singleton at the Apex Candleworks, and was he rough!"

Somehow, they'd become close friends. Martin was an avid buyer of her wares, but he was frugal and a little overcritical.

She lifted the basket lid, and he craned forward. "Quince jelly," he said. "Bottled strawberries, siruped figs. Is that caraway candy?" He chose a piece, munched it and laid down a halfpenny. "It'll pass," he said judiciously. She looked flattered.

Every evening for a month now she'd been ending her daily itinerary in this office, so they could walk to the corner together. As usual, she waited while he made his report.

To reach Mr. Tanletter's private office, you took a cramped passage back to a hidden closet, entered, found rough timber steps and ascended. The stairs popped you directly into Mr. Tanletter's presence. This space was otherwise unusable, so Mr. Tanletter treasured it; he treasured all that was unusable—candle stubs, tobacco sweepings, rusty pen points—and eventually found a use for them. Here, ceiling and walls followed the slope of the roof to the floor, and there was no window; the only light was from an old coach lamp. The imprisoned lamp fumes stung Martin's eyes as he came into the room.

Mr. Tanletter sat behind his desk. He was a smallish man, bony, in shoddy broadcloth. Once, in a rage, he'd broken his spectacles—both lenses; and he had then patiently pieced them together with homemade glue. Now his magnified eyeballs looked at you through a network of cracks. Silkily, he said, "Had a wonderful day, I'm sure. Didn't lose any more customers?"

"I lost Mr. Singleton, at the Apex," Martin said.

Mr. Tanletter recoiled in mock amazement. "But that's not possible. Not Mr. Singleton. Dear Mr. Singleton wouldn't leave us."

"He sure did," Martin said.

Mr. Tanletter leaned forward, dramatically. "What's the secret of your power, Martin?" He cupped an ear. "Whisper it. How do you knock off all our old friends so efficiently?" He pretended great intimacy, conspiratorial eagerness.

Mr. Tanletter didn't know what the very thought of a cigar could do to Martin.

"You're fired!" screamed Mr. Tanletter. He howled eerily. "Vanish!"

It was then that Martin saw the card on the

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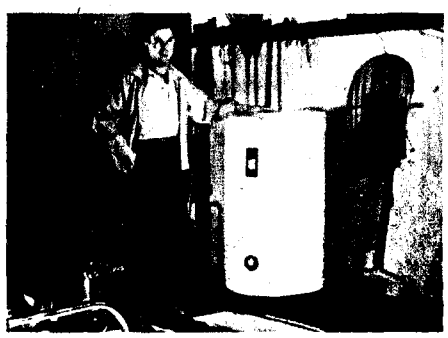

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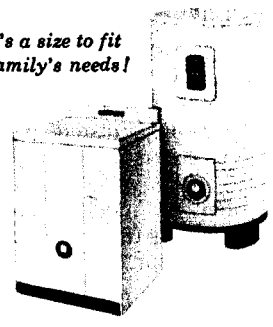

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desk. It was his own business card, the card with the bent corner that he'd given Ironmaster Logan. "That's my card," he said mildly. "I see Mr. Logan's been here."

Mr. Tanletter seemed not to hear. "Get out!" he screamed.

"If Mr. Logan's been here," Martin said, "and has placed an order in my name, I'm due my commission before I leave."

"Logan, Logan?" said Mr. Tanletter. "People come and go. I don't recall. If you're going to be quarrelsome about this, I'll tell you what I'll do. Forget Mr. Logan, and I'll rehire you. Take it or leave it."

Martin hesitated. "I'll take it," he decided.

"And bring your own broom," Mr. Tanletter added.

"My what?"

Mr. Tanletter bared little, chipped-china teeth. "Starting tomorrow," he said, "you're the janitor's helper, confined to the premises, and with a proportionate diminution of stipend, of course. Good evening."

"Good evening," Martin said, and descended the stairs.

POLLY was leaning against the wall in the murky room, waiting. She picked up her basket, and together they went down to the street. Shopboys and tradesmen were hanging shutters against the night, and mist from the river webbed the street lights. At the corner they paused, Polly to go east to the warrens of Battalion Court, Martin west to his cellar lodging on Plum. She seemed preoccupied. "If a salesman," she said, "hooked just one customer—the right one, that is—he could get married, couldn't he?"

"There aren't many customers like that," Martin said. He didn't tell her he was not even a salesman now.

"You caught one this afternoon," she said. "A Mr. Logan. I was in Tanletter's office when he placed an order in your name."

"Fifty Choice Superfines, commission eleven cents."

"Mr. Logan's an ironmaster."

"I know it."

She spoke rapidly: "Let me tell you about ironmasters, like Mr. Logan told Mr. Tanletter. An iron furnace is like a little town. The furnace Mr. Logan owns is called the St. George, and about six hundred men work for him, he says—teamsters, colliers, harness makers, forgemen and foundrymen. They rent their cottages from Mr. Logan and buy their merchandise at the St. George store."

Martin saw a haze before his eyes. "You mean he placed an order for his store? A big order?" he said.

"Ironmasters have an organization, Mr. Logan explained. He's president of the Four State Association of Ironmasters, with fifty-nine member furnaces. All told, he can buy for about twenty thousand tobacco users. Regular. Month in and month out."

Twice Martin tried to speak. His mouth felt full of tanbark. "How much did he order?"

"This was just a tryout. Eight hundred dollars' worth for the St. George. If the furnacemen like it, then he'll sign up the whole association with you."

Eight hundred dollars. "Did he pay cash?" Martin asked.

"No, freight on delivery. The shipment is to go upriver tomorrow on the Pittsburg Pilot Girl."

Martin thought of twenty thousand furnacemen puffing and munching Tanletter Tobacco. "I don't even own Mr. Logan any more," he said numbly. "I traded him for a broom."

It made no sense to Polly, so she ignored it completely. "Good night, Martin," she said.

"Good night," he said.

He watched her go, feeling very much alone. Frowning, he turned down Harrison Street. Any way he looked at what had happened, Mr. Tanletter had taken Ironmaster Logan from him by fraud. But what to do?

Mr. Logan belonged to him, to Martin, and would certainly follow him wherever he went. Martin would quit Tanletter's and hitch up with Crescent Tobacco of Louisville or, say, even Old Honesty of New York. And Mr. Logan would trail right along. New York? Why not? He might even find somebody there and get married, as Polly had so thoughtfully suggested.

There were two things to do, and quickly. First, if possible, he must stop that shipment on the Pittsburg Pilot Girl. Second, he must get in touch with Mr. Logan—visit him here in town or write him a letter at his home address.

The trouble was that, though there had been a lot of talk about Mr. Logan, nobody had happened to mention his home address. . . .

The Pittsburg Pilot Girl was a Thomas Line steamboat, and the Thomas Line dominated the western rivers. Its packets were legion; the number of land-hungry emigrants transported westward on their crammed decks was astronomical. Headquarters for the company was 227 Marberry Row, near the public landing, and Colonel Rufus Thomas was its firebrand potentate.

After a frugal supper alone in his cellar, Martin set out for Marberry Row. The streets were deserted, and as he approached the river, the warehouse smells of wet sawdust, rancid hides, and spices, came to his nostrils.

Marberry Row was a narrow, brick-paved yard, and number 227 was a tall door with a tiny, sulphurous light above its lintel. Martin twisted the china doorknob and entered an empty, plastered room. "Hello!" he called. At the far end of the room was a second door; he tried it, found it unlocked and went through.

This room was elegant with fine carpet and floral molding. Its plaster walls were hung with cards listing freight rates, notices of boats-and-stagecoach connections, certificates of Thomas Line speed records.

COLONEL THOMAS sat in an armchair by a small marble fireplace, buttering a chunk of cake with his pocketknife. He was eggshaped and dressed in tight, mustard-colored wool, and he was stubble-faced and weary-looking. As Martin appeared, he asked amiably, "And who are you?"

Martin told him. In a rush of words, he told him the whole story—Mr. Logan's wind-tossed hat, Mr. Tanletter's sharp bargain, the twenty thousand tobacco-starved furnacemen.

Colonel Thomas listened, fascinated.

"But why come to me?" he asked at last. "If I stop a shipment, it won't help you. Leave me out of it. If your story's true, you'd better grab on to this Mr. Logan and explain it all to him." He took a bite of buttered cake.

"I don't know where to find him."

"An ironmaster? That's easy." Colonel Thomas groped under his desk and came out with a business directory. "Metal trade," he said, quickly turning the pages.

Finally he closed the book. He closed it slowly, very gently.

"No Ironmaster Logan," he said. "None at all. And no St. George Furnace, anywhere." He licked his thumb. "What you up to, son?"

Martin seemed turned to stone.

"Whatever your game is," Colonel Thomas said kindly, "I wish you luck with it. But try it on somebody else."

Stiffly, Martin left the room and went out into the night.

He tucked his chin into his thread-

COLLIER'S

"One consolation. My little boy can lick his little boy"

BARNEY TOBEY

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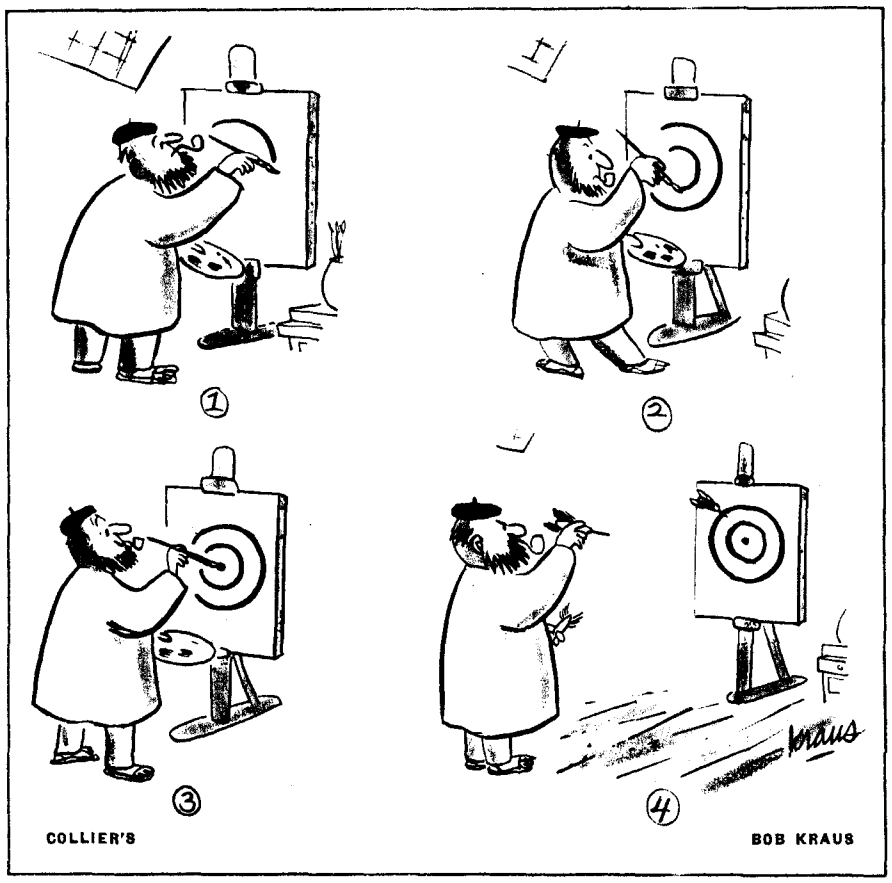

bare collar and headed for Battalion Court and Polly. It was some kind of diabolical conspiracy, and Polly could figure it out. Fog was drifting like tissue about the street lamps, wetting iron and stone. On Front Street, he turned into Cartmans Alley, which led to Battalion Court.

The alley walls were brick, ending in a crumbling masonry arch; beyond the arch was the court, a beaten-earth quadrangle. There was no light here. He found the arch by touch and stepped around its buttress into the court. Out of the darkness, close to his shoulder, a voice asked guardedly, "You Martin Taylor?"

It sounded very much like Mr. Logan—Mr. Logan altering his speech.

What now? Martin thought. "That's right," he said, and he added casually, "Who are you?"

"Don't move," the voice said. "Stand perfectly still." It was Mr. Logan, no doubt about it. "Put on your thinking cap. If Farmer Jones builds himself an octagonal house, nine feet to a side, and wishes to roof it half slate and half shingle, the slate coming from an old milkhouse and a third of the shingle coming from an old henhouse, how much new material will he need?"

MARTIN was stunned. "Why, that's a problem in geometry. First you take—" He was so involved, he scarcely sensed the motion.

Awareness came to him, and he ducked quickly. A knife blade, razor-sharp, was slashed toward him and ripped his coat sleeve.

He threw himself forward, in an effort to escape a desperate bear grip, and he felt Mr. Logan's waxed mustache against his ear lobe. He was confused, but he knew he was fighting for his life. The knife clattered, and Mr. Logan was disarmed.

Panting, he succeeded in forcing Mr. Logan to a knee. He pressed into him, into his struggling body, and Mr. Logan flinched in sudden panic. Crazily, Mr. Logan threshed himself free, and was gone. His footsteps echoed through the arch, fading away toward Front Street.

Martin got up, brushed off his clothes and crossed the court.

A shallow veranda ran around the court on all four sides, making a rectangular colonnade. Not a ray of lamplight escaped from the blotted windows, for the court's denizens were shy and clannish folk. Polly and her aunt lived in corner quarters. Martin rapped, waited and heard the great oak bar being drawn inside. He was warmly welcomed and seated himself on a hickory rocker. When the girl and her aunt had moved in from the country a few years before, they had brought their furniture with them.

Martin liked this crowded, rural room. There was no fog here, only warmness and the smell of food.

IN ONE corner was a massive four-poster with a patchwork cover, and facing it across the floor was a plantation-style stove, large enough to feed a dozen field hands. Along the walls were crocks and jugs and jars, overhead were loops of dried herbs, bright peppers, braids of onions.

Aunt Bella was a stocky, bull-faced woman, suspicious of the entire world, Martin and Polly excepted, and living entirely in a dream world of cookery. Alone with Polly, she scolded her bitterly for not getting married; alone with the pair, she stuffed Martin with cookies and sweets.

Now, chomping a gingersnap, Martin brought them up to the minute on the Logan-Tanletter-Colonel Thomas affair. "I'm pretty sure this Mr. Logan wants me dead," he said in conclusion. "Why?"

They shook their heads, and he shrugged.

He changed the subject. "Got any more of that caraway candy?" he said. Candy here at Polly's, on her hearthstone, was, of course, always gratis. "You're a pretty good confectioner, Miss Bella."

"Thanks," Aunt Bella said. "I try to be. I do everything the honest way. In my candy, I always use sugar."

"Is there any other way?"

"Oh, sure. Rinsings from molasses barrels or sugar hogsheads. Some old sugar hogsheads have up to fifty pounds of leftover caked in them. I steer clear of it and use coffee-grade sugar. Take

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my jams and jellies; I'm honest there too. I always put fruit in my fruit."

Martin looked baffled.

"Some don't, you know," said Aunt Bella. "Strawberry jam? Cochineal for a nice red coloring, orrisroot and acetic ester for a nice flavor. Pineapple? Turmeric for a nice yellow coloring and butyric ester for flavoring. Ice cream? Just steep up Irish moss till it gets thick and soupy, drain off the ugly, white liquid and freeze. Lots can't tell it from genuine cow cream. Oh, it's an evil world."

Her mention of an evil world brought Mr. Logan back to Martin's mind. "Now how did Mr. Logan happen to be here in Battalion Court waiting for me?" he asked.

"Why, he followed you here from Colonel Thomas' office," Aunt Bella explained.

"What's he got against me?"

"Nothing, likely. He just wants you dead."

"But why?" asked Polly. "Why on earth?"

AUNT BELLA explained. "Mr. Logan's a thief. He wants to steal eight hundred dollars' worth of Mr. Tanletter's tobacco and is about to do it, but suddenly Martin begins to meddle. So he wants Martin out of the way. When he first met Martin this afternoon on Pearl Street, Mr. Logan was just on the prowl, generally. He takes Martin's card then and thinks: Why, I can use this dunderhead. I'll show this card to introduce me, and I'll steal some tobacco. Then the dunderhead begins to meddle around, and Mr. Logan says, 'This is not so good. I'd better get rid of this dunderhead.' "

"I don't think Martin's a dunderhead," Polly said.

"Neither do I," Aunt Bella said. "I was just repeating Mr. Logan."

"It's easy to see you ladies don't understand business," Martin said genially. "Now, I've been in commerce for some time. Mr. Logan couldn't possibly steal Mr. Tanletter's tobacco shipment, and I'll tell you why. It's being sent freight on delivery. It'll be shipped to Mr. Logan somewhere by steamboat, and he'll have to fork over eight hundred dollars before it passes into his hands. You don't think Mr. Tanletter's going to hand out that much merchandise just because a stranger has a business card of mine, do you? Mr. Tanletter's smart."

"But he never ran into Mr. Logan before," Aunt Bella said.

"That tobacco's perfectly safe," Martin insisted.

"That's what Mr. Tanletter thinks," Aunt Bella said.

They parched corn on the hearth, and Martin entertained them with tales of his boyhood. It was about the only period of importance in his life, his boyhood, and he reminisced at every opportunity, like an old man. Polly, as usual, seemed particularly interested in the little girls he'd played with. It was ten o'clock when he left.

The fog had dispersed, but the court was a sodden black beneath a sky of sooty clouds. Martin had crossed the beaten earth to the arch, to the scene of his unpleasant experience, when his shoe touched something soft; he bent down and picked up a wad of fabric. He carried it down the passage, out onto Front Street, and held it beneath a street lamp.

It was a cap, a steamboater's cap with a patent-leather visor. Once it had been an officer's cap, long discarded, no doubt, because of its shabbiness.

COLLIER'S

"Yes, Tom, give me time to finish the dishes and sweep the kitchen; then I'll be all set in a jiffy"

LEO GAREL

Faded letters across its front said *Pittsburg Pilot Girl.*

Mr. Logan had dropped it.

Martin threw it over a fence quickly, as though it were sizzling hot, and continued east on Front Street. After a bit, he came to the public landing.

Aunt Bella had disturbed him. Maybe Mr. Tanletter's tobacco, value eight hundred dollars, was actually in danger. If Colonel Thomas, steamboat potentate, wouldn't stop the shipment, perhaps the Pilot Girl's captain would. . . .

The great landing, acres in area, was threaded in the darkness with the bobbing lanterns of cargo workers. Half a dozen boats stood in a line, their stems shoved up on the cobbles. In the center was the Pittsburg Pilot Girl, a giant of three hundred tons and a forty-foot beam. Of her three cake-layer decks, the first showed no lights, the second many, and the third a twinkle here and there. The plank was down; Martin boarded her without interference. This wasn't going to be a happy interview. Steamboat captains could really explode.

Where to find the captain? Martin had never been on a steamboat in his life. On the other hand, he'd had many elaborate conversations with his curbstone friends on this sporty subject and understood the plan of a boat thoroughly.

Now he was on the main deck, the lowest layer, devoted to freight and machinery and steerage. This was the lower layer of passengers too, deck passengers, cut-fare travelers. Down-river this deck would be crowded with emigrants; upriver now, the few sleeping men who were stretched on its planking were mainly farmers returning from New Orleans, and here and there was a trapper in a buffalo hide. It was doubtful, at this hour, that the captain would be found here. Martin went up a sweeping staircase to the second deck.

This was the deck of elegance, the saloon deck.

Here he immediately ran into complications. At the stairhead was a small office blocking the entrance to the deck proper. A tough-looking little man stood behind a folding counter; he eyed Martin with distaste and asked coldly, "Where to?"

He was the purser, the watchdog, Martin knew, of all the saloon-deck luxury, the cut glass and mahogany and crystal, the tassels and velvet and brocade. Gold letters on his cap said *Pittsburg Pilot Girl.*

"I can't find the captain," Martin told him.

The little man looked concerned. "Have you tried the French Quarter in New Orleans? I distinctly saw him there. I saw him indistinctly in St. Louis, but that's another story."

"Thank you," Martin said politely. "I'll tell Colonel Thomas."

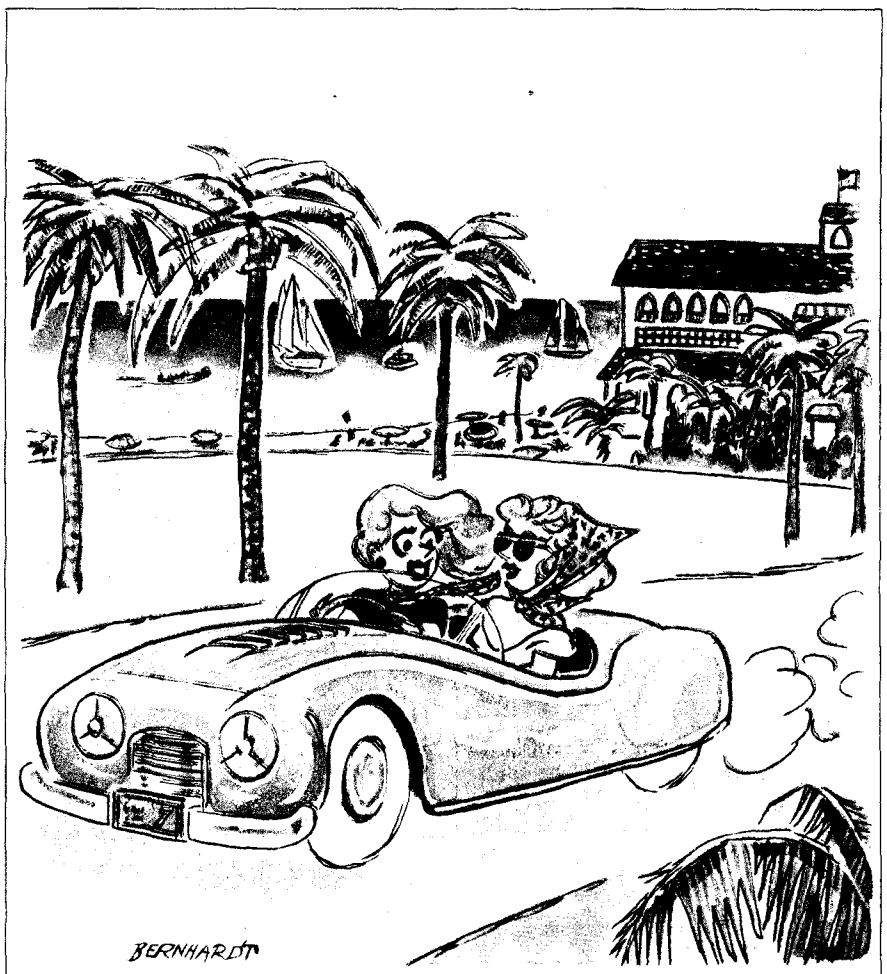
"Oh," the man said. "Oh. In that case you'll find him above, in the barbershop. You go up them steps there between them two smoke pipes, and it'll be the officers' staterooms. You go aft to the barbershop at the stern rail. You can't miss it."

This second flight of steps brought Martin to a deck forty or so feet above the river. The bobbing lights in the night below him seemed very far away. He followed the rail and made his way to the rear of the boat. The parade of little doors to the officers' cabins were shut, the ports dark. At the far rear was a deckhouse about twenty feet square and a dozen feet high. It had windows, not ports, and its windows were blazing with golden light.

Martin lifted the latch and went in.

THE room was lighted by two cut-glass chandeliers. There was a turkey-red Axminster on the floor and a great gold-framed painting on the wall —a little boy in silk pants tending a flock of sheep. A couple dozen men—planters, many traveling merchants, a few gamblers perhaps—lounged about in argument or laughter. Martin was unnoticed in the doorway. Across the room, directly under the painting, was a barber chair.

The chair had a customer, a man with muttonchop whiskers and a furious bellow, a man in a captain's jacket. He was demanding just about everything on the shelf, Balm of a Thousand Flow-



COLLIER'S

"His millions haven't brought him happiness but they've sure helped brighten *my* life"

GLENN R. BERNHARDT

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ers, Hair Invigorator, Ox-Marrow Pomade. The barber, a plump man with an apron tied under his armpits, hopped about, fawning, trying to please.

The barber turned his head a little and Martin saw a glossy mustache. First he recognized the mustache, then Mr. Logan.

Boat's barber on the Pittsburg Pilot Girl was Mr. Logan.

Silently, Martin drew back and shut the door in front of him. Thoughtfully, he descended to the saloon deck.

The tough-looking little purser was still behind the counter, at the moment gazing sentimentally at a pressed fern in a miniature volume of love poems. He put the book away. "Find him?" he asked.

"Yes," said Martin. "Who is the barber working on him?"

"Slippy Batson. Pretty comic, eh?"

"Been with the Pilot Girl long?"

"Yes, indeed. We couldn't get along without old Slippy. Why?"

"Got anything to do with the cargo?"

"You're thinking of his brother Dresden. It's Dresden Batson that's the Pilot Girl's shipping master."

MARTIN thanked him and left. He ran down the stairs to the main deck, across the plank to the cobblestones, and headed as fast as he could go for Marberry Row and Colonel Thomas. Martin only hoped that the colonel was still in his office.

He was, and he greeted Martin cordially.

The fire had gone to embers in the little marble fireplace, the windowpanes were beaded with cold, and Colonel Thomas had wrapped an old yarn muffler around his throat. His pocketknife was in his hand again, spreading more butter on more cake. He chewed and listened, sad-eyed, while Martin poured forth his story. "This Mr. Logan, really Slippy Batson, must have seen me here with you, and got suspicious that I'd show him up; so he followed me to Batalion Court and tried to kill me," Martin said.

"Sounds logical," Colonel Thomas agreed.

"His brother, this Dresden Batson," Martin said excitedly, "is the key to the whole thing. He's the Pilot Girl's shipping master. Once they get valuable cargo on board, any kind of cargo, the shipping master can simply relabel it, readdress it and unload it anywhere. His bills of lading, and your bills of lading, would be in perfect order, but the merchandise would simply vanish. Could this be?"

"It not only could be," said Colonel Thomas slowly, "you've hit the nail exactly on the head." He wiped his fingers carefully, one by one, on a fine linen handkerchief. "I'm greatly indebted to you, son."

Martin waited.

"We've been having cargo abstractions on the Pilot Girl for some time," the colonel said. "Before that, I had them on the Supreme. The Batsons, Dresden and Slippy, were on the Supreme then. Shipping master and barber. We've been thinking it was deck thieves. Deck thieves can be hard to catch. So it was my own shipping master, eh?"

The room was cold and moist, and the red embers in the fireplace had burned themselves into a dusty white powder.

Suddenly it came to Martin that it was Colonel Thomas, not Mr. Logan, who had been his act of Providence. Here was Colonel Thomas, the kingpin of river traffic, indebted to him, even affectionate toward him. The idea came to Martin that perhaps Colonel Thomas would buy a few boxes of cigars. If he struck while the iron was hot and snagged so important a personage, then Mr. Tanletter would have to reconsider him. "I represent Tanletter's Fine Tobaccos for Personages of Refinement and Taste," he said.

Colonel Thomas smiled receptively, benevolently. "'Select cigars of Spanish, Ohio and Kentucky leaf. Very best grade honeydew cut chewing. Gah!'"

"Did you say *gah?*" asked Colonel Thomas, blinking.

As usual, Martin's emotions took over completely; the remembrance of his first, youthful experiment with tobacco overwhelmed him. Nausea flooded him, and his face took on a ghostly pallor. He tried to smile bravely.

"Are you sick?" Colonel Thomas asked. "You're making a repulsive face." The colonel seemed a little shaken. "I don't think I'd care for any Tanletter cigars. You work where they make them—you should know."

Then a greater power seemed to take hold of Martin. He scarcely heard the words he spoke, "You like cake. Do you like candy and jam?" he asked.

"Fact is, I do," Colonel Thomas said.

"Me too," Martin said. A panorama of all the cake and candy he'd ever eaten passed before him, and his face glowed beatifically.

Colonel Thomas glowed unconsciously in response.

"Let me tell you about candy," Martin said urgently. "Cheap candy is made from barrel rinsings. You didn't know that, did you?"

Colonel Thomas shook his head.

"Now let me tell you about jams and jellies—the commercial product. Cheap jelly is right out of the apothecary shop. Strawberry? Cochineal for coloring—"

"Why, cochineal is nasty little red bugs!"

"—cochineal for a nice red coloring, orrisroot and acetic ester for flavoring. Pineapple? Turmeric for a nice yellow and butyric ester for flavoring."

Now it was Colonel Thomas who looked nauseated.

Martin pressed him. "You sell sweets on the Pilot Girl, don't you?" he said. "Sure. Well, tomorrow I want you to meet some friends of mine. Miss Bella and Miss Polly Hopkins. They're honest confectioners. They put fruit in their fruit. Maybe you could place a small order with them for a tryout."

THE colonel became enthusiastic. "You're going to turn out to be a godsend!" he said. "Steamboats are known, build their reputations, on the grade of food they serve. Such horrible, trashy jam I've been selling. I ship droves of emigrants, and emigrants are insatiable jam and jelly eaters. Is this Hopkins Company a large one?"

"A small one."

"An idea has just come to me. Here's what we could do: I'll buy into it, for the line, and buy you into it, and we'll really go into production. Now let me figure."

He closed his eyes and moved his lips in calculation. "I've six boats like the Pilot Girl," he said. "She carries about seventy-five stateroomers and maybe three hundred deck passengers. Call it twenty-five hundred jam eaters, counting officers. I belong to an association of steamboat owners. Altogether, we must carry fifty thousand passengers . . ."

Martin traded twenty thousand furnacemen for fifty thousand emigrants.

"I need you, son, I need you," Colonel Thomas said.

And then he looked worried. "The catch is Mr. Tanletter," he said. "You're a smart lad, smart. A nickel says you're the keystone of his organization. How can we get him to let you go; how can we get him to release you?"

"Let me handle it," Martin said. "I'm sure it can be arranged." ▲▲▲

BUTCH

"I *am* goin' to buy myself a valise. I happen to be waitin' for a good sale, that's all"

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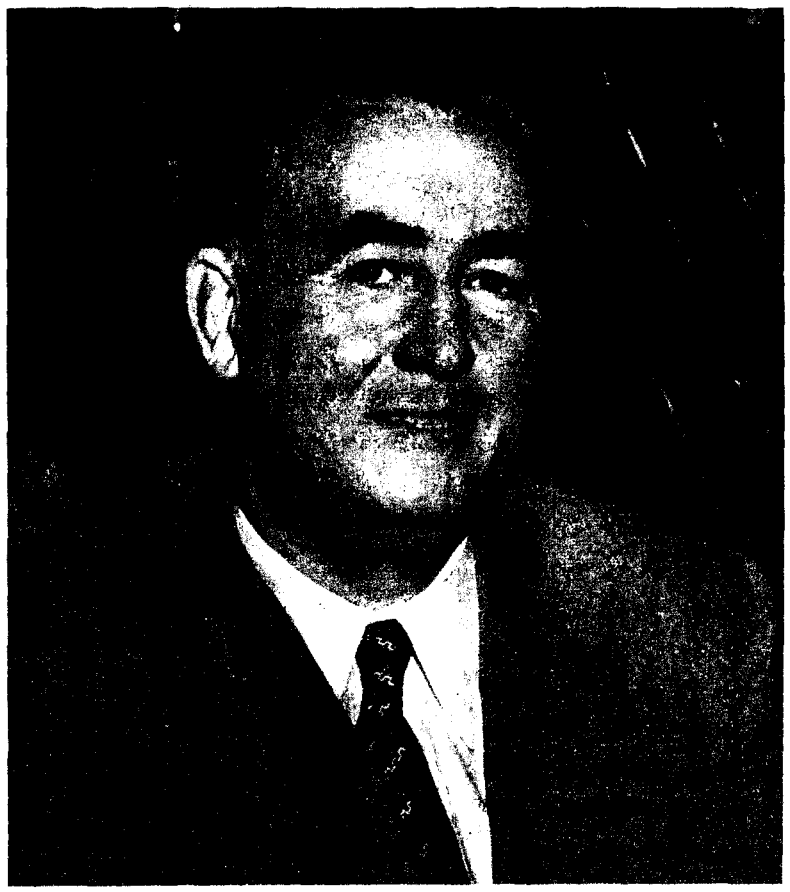
IKE'S PIPEFITTER

Ex-plumber Martin Durkin, the new Secretary of Labor, was yanked out of relative obscurity to become the most controversial member of the Cabinet. He may prove a surprise to the officials he works with



UNITED PRESS

Durkin grew up in Chicago's South Side and left school at 15 to work in a packing house. Yet he remembers his childhood fondly

By SAMUEL GRAFTON

MARTIN PATRICK DURKIN, a broad, powerful man of fifty-eight, grew up near the Chicago stockyards, didn't go to school much, started work at fifteen in a slaughterhouse, rose to the top of the AFL plumbers and pipefitters union, spent his life as a Democrat and voted for Adlai Stevenson last November. The result, in this land of the wonderful paradox, is that he looks like a business executive, talks in the cultivated accents of a college professor, collects books and is Secretary of Labor in the Republican administration of Dwight D. Eisenhower.

As a member of the Cabinet, Durkin is the first plumber of the land. He is the only Democrat at the table, the only Roman Catholic; and he is also the only father in the Cabinet—or in any other Cabinet of recent memory—who has two sons who earn their livings by working with their hands. Both are pipefitters.

Senator Robert A. Taft, who has certain reservations about Democratic labor leaders, described the Durkin appointment as incredible. The senator may have the comfort of knowing that it also seemed incredible to Durkin. The new Secretary of Labor still doesn't know who recommended him.

His phone rang one afternoon, in the Washington offices of the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry, and a voice said: "This is Herbert Brownell."

"Who?" asked Durkin.

"Brownell. I am calling for General Eisenhower."

Durkin recognized the name of the then Attorney General-designate.

"Oh, yes," he said.

"Would you care to come to New York to talk with the general?"

Durkin, assuming the general merely wanted him to suggest names for Secretary of Labor, caught a New York train, was taken to the Eisenhowers' home on Morningside Drive, met the President-to-be for the first time, and was informed that he had been tapped for the Cabinet.

Durkin swallowed hard and said: "General, has anybody told you that I'm a Democrat and voted for Mr. Stevenson?"

"Do you think that would interfere with the performance of your duties?" asked Eisenhower.

"No, sir."

"All right, then . . ."

Martin Durkin was started on the biggest job of his pipefitting career: laying a pipe line between the new Republican administration and the labor movement.

The man who was called to this job gets up at 5:30 A.M. every day without fail, to go to Mass. He communicates at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, just across the line in Washington from his Chevy Chase, Maryland, home, has his breakfast and then goes to his office; he is usually first in. When he is on the road, he will drive 50 miles before breakfast, if necessary, to find a church in which he can fulfill his daily duties.

In our determinedly secular society, in which self-denial is not a characteristic mood, Durkin is an unusual figure. He not only doesn't use the supports of liquor and tobacco enjoyed by so many people, but he has given up the subtler props of impatience, temper, irritability.

"Durkin?" said a Washington friend. "I'll tell you about Durkin. He hates to be late. If he has to catch a train, he's at the station a half hour early. If he has to meet someone and he's late, he's miserable.

"But if you have an appointment with him, and *you* come late, very late, he waits patiently and greets you with a smile. He isn't worrying about improving you. He figures that's your problem. There's only one man Durkin fights, and that's Durkin."

Many people give up smoking and drinking for the keen pleasure of trying to persuade others to do likewise. Not Durkin. He keeps cigars and drinking liquor for those who want them. "Light up!" he says, in his own home, and he shoves an ash tray toward you.

He had declined pleasantly to be interviewed in his office at the plumbers' and pipefitters' headquarters ("I don't do anything there I wasn't hired to do," he said) so, trying not to be late, I had gone to his whitewashed brick house in the suburban area where Maryland hooks on to the District of Columbia. The house sparkles inside and out; everything that can be waxed has been waxed, and everything that can be polished has been polished. There is a certain symmetry about the internal arrangements; absolutely nothing has been "strewn" or "flung" in the modern decorative way, and I felt I was visiting a family in which the ideas of beauty and order are closely connected.

We talked about Durkin's Cabinet post.

"Everybody's surprised by this appointment," he said, "myself included. It's always been that way with my jobs. In 1921, in Chicago, they made me business representative of my local, and everybody was startled. In 1933, Governor Horner made me director of labor for Illinois, and people said: 'Who's Durkin?' It's a kind of pattern."

He lets himself be interviewed the way he would let a barber cut his hair. A large, placid man in blue serge, he answers each question precisely but volunteers almost nothing. He has all the time in the world. If you pause to think between questions, he waits with you. After a while, the interviewer gets an uncomfortable feeling that this easy, smiling man is viewing him as an occasion for exercising the virtue of patience, and that breaks up the meeting.

Physically, Durkin is a strong man with good shoulders, but he doesn't play games and never takes vacations. He tried golf conscientiously several years ago and managed a number of rounds on a municipal course, but it didn't take. His idea of a rattling good time during a hot summer month is to make a motor tour of American and Canadian cities, visiting locals of the plumbers and pipefitters union. He takes as many members of his family along as he can induce to come; then, in each city, he disappears into the offices of the local for a day of conferences and speechmaking. Then he goes on to the next town.

His family once persuaded Durkin to rent a summer cottage at a Minnesota lake. After three days, every morning of which he drove 25 miles to Mass, he went back to his Washington office.

Once, during a week end at a cottage on the Fox River, near Chicago, his friends, walking out of doors late one night, were startled by a loud voice, booming over the water.

"It's just Marty saying his prayers," explained his wife, Anna. He was saying them at an open window. Durkin's voice, which is low, is raised only in prayer. At church, say members of his family, he forgets himself and can be heard above the others; at home, when he goes to his bedroom to say his Rosary, his devotions are sometimes audible throughout the house.

Years ago, he decided, without saying much about it, always to keep some poor family under his wing. But it occurred to him that merely to write a check, giving up only the cash and a mo-

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ment out of his day, was an act without significance, so he buys food for his protégé family in person. Once a week, he turns up at a Washington market and walks among the counters, thoughtfully assembling a basket of groceries. When his current poor family includes small children, he confers with his wife or daughters-in-law about what sort of baby food to buy.

Collecting groceries for folks who need them is a pleasant occupation for Durkin, but collecting thanks is not. So when he has made up his bundle, he usually sends it over by one of his sons or a messenger. When one family graduates to solvency, through recovery from illness or a new job, he looks about for another family, sometimes asking a priest to scout one for him.

Among the luxuries Durkin does not allow himself is self-pity. I have stood in the streets of Chicago's South Side, near 50th and Morgan, where Durkin grew up. It is a patchy area of frame houses, factories, empty lots, railway overpasses; metropolitan dolor hangs heavily over it. Many a modern novelist has bitterly resented, for three or four hundred pages at a crack, a childhood spent in such surroundings. Durkin remembers his childhood fondly.

"We had quite a few empty lots," he says, "so we could play ball Saturdays, and Sundays after Mass. Monday and Wednesday nights we went to an indoor gym at one of the small parks. We got our recreation that way. I still like to go home to Chicago and walk down those streets and call the fellows by name."

Durkin spent his boyhood as one of a family of ten, supported by his father's earnings of $2 a day as a stationary fireman at a glue works. His father worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Once a fortnight, to make the turnabout from day to night shift, he worked 24 hours through. Martin, the oldest child, who loved school, switched to night courses at fifteen so he could haul meat on the killing and cutting floor of a packing house, but even in discussing this he shows no emotional scar tissue.

"I've had a happy life," he says. "Coming, as I did, from the poorer class of people, I've had a good life, an excellent life."

Durkin's wife, the former Anna Helen McNicholas, grew up on Halsted Street, not far from Morgan. They were married 31 years ago, during Durkin's first year as business representative of Local 597, and have three sons—Martin B., thirty, William J., twenty-nine, John Francis, nineteen.

Wife Consulted About Acceptance

When Eisenhower, at 60 Morningside Drive, broke the news to Durkin of his Cabinet appointment, Durkin asked time to talk it over with his wife, "to see if she thought it was a proper thing to do." The new administration waited until the family conference was held before making the announcement. When I asked to talk with Mrs. Durkin, a slight, amiable woman, Durkin called her in, presented me, and gravely left the room so as not to influence the conversation. We talked at length of Durkin's early days in Chicago.

Later, when Durkin returned to the room, I spoke to the new Cabinet member about his life as a union member and leader. Durkin's emotion about the labor movement is ready and deep. When he describes how, at seventeen, he was brought around to the Chicago local of the plumbers and pipefitters by a friend of his father, and admitted as a helper, he makes it sound like a gay folk ceremony.

The labor life of Washington today has its own social aspects, which no novelist has yet chronicled. Several years ago, Durkin's middle son, William J., married June Redmond, daughter of John P. Redmond, president of the AFL's International Association of Fire Fighters. The Shoreham Hotel wedding reception for this union of the pipefitters and the fire fighters was practically an AFL convention, with speeches by George Meany and by John Reilly of the railway mail clerks, and with half the bigwigs of the AFL embarrassing the bride by eloquent remarks about future grandchildren.

William J., who works as a pipefitter for an air-conditioning company in the Washington area, says of his father that he is "strict, but fair." "Or you could say," he says, "kind, but just." The only time Bill was ever punished was when his father caught him smoking "while I was at an age when he didn't think that was the best thing to do." Characteristically, Durkin brooded about the matter for a couple of days, then said: "Since you've started, you might as well smoke at home, near your family."

Bill served as a private in Europe during the war. His father, sent to Europe by the government to study bomb damage as a member of the AFL building-construction trades department, took along two pineapple upside-down cakes, his

Before taking Cabinet post, Durkin headed AFL plumbers and pipefitters union. He's shown here visiting rank-and-filers on a construction job in Washington, where union has headquarters. Besides his union activity, he served eight years as state director of labor in Illinois

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son's favorite, in the hope of finding him somewhere on the Continent, though he had only an APO number for an address.

Durkin landed at Orly Airfield, near Paris, and discovered that his son was stationed right there, but was off on a 24-hour pass. He climbed into a command car, with a colonel, to drive to Paris, and on the way saw his son, standing by the roadside, waiting for a hitch. The colonel, for a gag, stopped the car, stepped outside, and, addressing the young man severely, ordered him in. Bill, trembling in every joint, complied, saw his father and almost fell back into the road.

Son Too Scared to Pick Up His Date

They drove into Paris, where Bill had a date with a girl who was waiting for him on a street corner. Sitting between the august presences of the colonel and his father, he didn't dare say anything about it, and they drove by the miss. Bill never did see her again.

Bill remembers dimly a house in Chicago, during depression years, when from two to five steamfitters would show up every night, silent, strained men, being given shirts and food and other help to tide them over hard times.

In 1933, a group of Chicago labor representatives met to suggest names to the newly elected Governor Henry Horner for the post of state director of labor. Members offered Durkin's name. Durkin refused to entertain the idea. "I was thirty-eight," he says. "I felt the appointment should go to an older man, as a crowning glory to his labor life." But in the end he yielded.

It was a yeasty time, early in the New Deal, when there was a vast amount of new labor legislation to absorb and digest, new employment exchanges to set up, unemployment compensation plans to start. The Illinois Department of Labor grew from 250 employees to 3,000 during Durkin's incumbency, and it's a measure of his success that he never was seriously accused of payroll padding. He stayed on for eight years under three governors, leaving eight months after the Republican administration of Dwight Green took office.

Durkin's break with Green resulted from the labor official's refusal to approve unemployment compensation for striking mine workers; the governor, under heavy pressure, sided with the union. "I got along with Mr. Durkin all right," Green said recently. "He was let out for political reasons."

The late Governor Horner said of Durkin's appointment: "The best I ever made." Durkin is given a large share of the credit for the passage in Illinois of a so-called antisweat-shop law, a minimum-wage law for women and children, an eight-hour day for women, and legislation for unemployment and disability compensation.

"I'd give a tip to anybody who is going to work with him," says a man who has known him a long time. "He expects a full day's work for a day's pay. He's amiable and forgiving with people, but not about slackness. Those who work for him, work."

Durkin drives himself hard. His oldest son, Martin B., now a pipefitter for an engineering firm in the Washington area, remembers taking walks with his father, while a boy; he always had to run to keep up. Yet Durkin usually avoids forcing people to match his pace; where others are involved, patience reasserts itself and he slows down. In his early years as a pipefitter in Chicago, he would go to the stockyard taverns with some of his friends, drink ginger ale while they drank stronger stuff, and then help take them home. In the same way, he listens patiently to anyone who wants to talk to him, never losing his smile.

Durkin's youngest son, John Francis, is a student at Devitt School in Bethesda, Maryland, not far from Chevy Chase. He is thinking of going into religious life; he is especially interested in the Trappist order, whose rule includes a vow of silence. Durkin sometimes goes along with the boy when he makes retreat at a Trappist monastery on the banks of the Shenandoah, near Berryville, Virginia.

What kind of Cabinet officer will Durkin be? I think I know the answer. Those who expect him to act like a wild Democratic bull in a Republican china shop will be disappointed; that's not his way. He is a man who likes to end an argument, rather than start one. His method is conference, not public statement. His old desk, in the offices of the plumbers and pipefitters international, actually stands at the head of a conference table, in a conference room; the table was his tool, as a saw is a carpenter's.

I asked him what he intended to do as Secretary of Labor. He said: "I'll study the legislation which sets up the department, and we'll do everything we can to place into effect the policies required under the act."

In Durkin's case, even a legislative cliché takes on a special importance, because of his earnestness; he is the kind of man who gets a cliché into his teeth and tries to carry it through to reality. When he says he will try, as required, to "advance profitable employment," one feels he has studied the words and will soberly try to give them meaning.

One newspaper walloped him after his appointment on the ground that he was going into the government to represent labor rather than the public. He shrugged it off. "You can't long displease the public and make gains for anybody, labor or industry," he said.

To his Cabinet mates in the new administration, he may prove a little hard to understand. Most of them are men of large affairs, and Durkin's life may appear to them rather narrow. He has never belonged to a country club. He hurries home to his family at 4:30 P.M., the Washington closing hour. At Easter, he buys his four grandchildren bunnies almost his own size, and delivers them himself—a big, serious man carrying the great stuffed animals up the front walk.

At night he often just watches television. He is not a club or lodge man.

His Enthusiasm for Education

There is in his life little of the complicated, ornate, expensive fun that can go with success in America. He worries about education, and feels "you can't get enough." Both his older sons take or audit college courses constantly, though it's not easy—"a pipefitter is beat at night." When Durkin hears of a new course one of them might take, he hurries over to talk about it.

He buys books constantly, and gives many away. He buys dogs the same way. He used to bring dogs home unexpectedly at day's end, and Mrs. Durkin would patiently help care for them. Now he usually gives them to others. His idea of fun is to find somebody who needs a dog. He discovered that the Trappists at Berryville needed a new sheep dog for their herds; he bought a pedigreed animal and delightedly drove it down in his car.

Yet the brilliant and successful men who sit at the Cabinet table with Durkin may find him, despite (or perhaps because) of his homely qualities, a curiously formidable figure. Having fought and disciplined his own will, he has made it a more powerful instrument than ever for the performance of his duty. His unconcern about his dignity has given him a dignity which is truly impressive.

Reuben G. Soderstrom, president of the Illinois Federation of Labor, who has known Durkin for 25 years, remembers best, out of that quarter century, that once when a man had had a fit in front of a Washington hotel, Durkin promptly left a group, went over, made himself responsible and obtained assistance. "I can still hear him saying, in his low voice, 'The man needs help,' " says Soderstrom.

Father David Fullmer, assistant superintendent of parochial education in Chicago, a friend of Durkin, said: "Watch him when he's talking about something that interests him, and somebody interrupts him, perhaps thoughtlessly. He will stop, turn to the interrupter, answer him politely and fully, turn back to the man he was talking to in the first place, pick right up where he was, and show no sign that he's irritated."

If I were pressed to say what I have learned from Martin Durkin, it would be that I think I understand a little more completely what the word "meek" means, as used in the Bible. It doesn't mean groveling in your relations with others, or thinking yourself unworthy in comparison with them; perhaps it just means not thinking about yourself at all. ▲▲▲

Collier's for February 7, 1953

The new secretary with his wife, Anna, and youngest son, John. Two other sons, Martin and William, work as pipefitters in Washington area. John, like his father, is deeply religious, and may join Trappists

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Man Here Owns a Fire Engine

Here's a Jones that anyone would have a hard time keeping up with

LIKE most of the rest of us, Proctor Patterson Jones grew up with a dream of glory. *He* always wanted to be a fireman. Last summer, at the age of thirty-six, Mr. Jones, a tax consultant, caught up with his dream. He bought himself a genuine fire engine.

Proctor Jones discovered his engine in a junk yard near his home town—Atherton, California. It was a 1914, right-hand drive Seagrave hook-and-ladder truck, painted a fine, deep red, with old gold lettering that said "Truck Company 62." It was 35 feet long, and he knew immediately that he was going to buy it. To justify his purchase, he told Mrs. Jones the old truck would make a wonderful plaything for their children, Beverly, a four-year-old boy, and Martha Ferne, two. "It will be educational," he said.

It is not recorded whether Mrs. Jones fell for the flummery, but she agreed. Mr. Jones made out a check for $250 and the truck was his.

Once he had the behemoth hauled to his back yard, he looked under the hood. The massive, six-cylinder motor (each cylinder has four spark plugs) fairly reeked with potential power. "It would only be sensible to put the motor in running order," Jones mused. He called a mechanic, and was soon in business. But it takes two men to drive the truck: one (Jones himself) at the driver's wheel, and one at the tiller wheel, which guides the rear wheels. A man with a real hook-and-ladder in his yard, however, can never be without friends, and shortly he had almost enough volunteers to man a battleship.

Now, with the motor fixed up, the body and trim polished to a high shine and the running crew chosen, Truck Company 62 was ready to go. But where? And why? Proctor Jones didn't have to look far for answers. The neighborhood kids and his own two children had for several weeks been impatiently waiting for the call. One bright Sunday morning they got it. Almost two dozen youngsters and a handful of adults scrambled aboard. Jones started the thunderous old motor, and the hook-and-ladder rumbled out of the back yard for the first of its weekly tours of Atherton.

"Where's the fire?" passing motorists called.

"There isn't any," Chief Jones shouted back.

Then everybody laughed—especially Proctor Jones, for his dream had come true.

ROBERT DE ROOS

Proctor Jones, in driver's seat of his 1914 right-hand-drive fire engine, tries to make his excited crew hold still for the camera

PHOTOGRAPH FOR COLLIER'S BY JOHN FLOREA

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ROSWELL KELLER

A girl whispered from the doorway: "Please, may I come in?"

The Time of Year

By HAMLEN HUNT

GREER HOUSE, an ivy-covered brick building on the Charles River, had a well-tended look, and tonight, with all the windows lighted because of the annual house dance, it also had a look of elegant gaiety. Students were having parties in their rooms, and through the open windows quick conversation and laughter streamed out like the very banners of the army of youth.

Ann Lely, however, was a veteran of twenty-nine, no longer part of that noisy army. She stood beside one of her living-room windows and sighed because the autumnal wind made her heart ache. Everyone else was young and excited and carefree, while she, although she was blonde and pretty and had on a party dress, had duties and responsibilities. Even John, her husband, was free and on the wing.

John was an instructor in history and Ann worked in one of the university libraries, and even their combined salaries did not add up to much. They lived in this rather formal academic luxury because John was housemaster of Greer. He advised and tutored students, while Ann had Sunday-afternoon parties for lonely boys. When there were big social functions, both the master and his wife were on duty. That was why the Lelys were having open house tonight.

From time to time, couples would come into the housemaster's quarters to pay their respects, and then they would go back to the dance, or their car doors would bang as they set out for somewhere else.

Ann turned away from the window with a guilty start when a girl whispered from the doorway: "Please, may I come in?"

"Of course," Ann said, moving forward to the punch bowl set round with gleaming glasses. How orderly and elderly the scene must appear! "We're delighted to have you."

"My name's Lucy Farnham," the girl said, then added, fiercely and abruptly, "I can't go back there!"

Ann said hospitably, "Stay as long as you like, and I hope your friends will join you. How's the dance going?" If she sounded wistful, the other did not notice.

"Terribly, for me," she said, and it was painful to see how much it mattered to her.

"What's become of your date?" Ann asked matter-of-factly.

No girl came to a Greer House dance without having been asked by one of the students. Of course, occasionally something unpleasant, or even startling, happened. Undergraduates had been known to drink too much. Cars smashed up. Fights occurred.

"He's in the infirmary, and I don't even know him very well," the girl said. "They think he pulled a ligament in his leg this afternoon, playing squash or something. But I was already here for the week end, and I couldn't go back to college. He told some friend of his to look after me and take me to the dance."

"And it isn't working out very well?" Ann asked.

"He never showed up," the girl said bitterly. "I stayed upstairs in the rooms after my roommate and the others left. Somebody came and got me and danced once and said they'd see if they could find him. My roommate's gone off with the boy she's engaged to, and they've got my car, so I can't leave. We drove up from Connecticut together. She made me come—I suppose because she wanted the car."

There was such bitterness in her young voice that Ann was startled. Lucy Farnham had a very white face framed in dark hair, she was quite lovely, and she wore an obviously expensive evening dress. Beside it, Ann's amber-colored velveteen seemed clumsily made. But the girl, who was not more than nineteen, didn't have much confidence in her capacity to have a friend, or a date, or even a good time at a dance. Vaguely, Ann remembered the abysmal shame that came from failure at a dance.

"I feel like a frog in a swamp out there," the girl said. "If my roommate had even stayed around a while, I might have got started, but she's in love, and nothing else matters to her."

"Haven't you ever felt that way?" Ann asked, more to make conversation than for any other reason. The girl obviously needed to talk away her misery.

Lucy said, "Frankly, I'm not impressed by love. My mother's on her third love match, and my father's on his fourth divorce. Neither of them ever gave me much time or thought. Even my roommate's been engaged before."

Ann said the obvious thing. "You're very young. Someday you'll change your mind."

"No!" the girl said. Suddenly she flung her punch glass to the hearth, where it crashed. "Listen. I'm rich. I'm sugar and railroads. I'm a curiosity. Boys ask me out on a bet, to see what goes with my name, or else they're scared to turn up."

"I see," Ann said.

The girl looked at the broken glass. "I'm sorry about that," she said. "I'll pay for it." She touched her small velvet bag, then flushed. "I'm sorry again. I'm so rich I never have money like other people. It's all charge accounts and checks. I haven't even enough cash for a train ticket, or I'd leave."

"The punch set comes with the job," Ann said. "It doesn't matter if a few glasses get broken."

There were footsteps which Ann recognized, but the girl turned panicky. "What am I going to do? I can't go back!"

JOHN LELY looked like any of his students, though he was thirty, and he was eager and flushed by his social duties, which he loved to perform. An hour ago, Ann, seeing him go off to the dance, had felt jealous and forlorn because she had to stay with the punch bowl. She had felt so old and so nailed down by marriage, she had been startled by her fierce envy of those who were young and free, with all their big decisions still before them.

"John, this is Miss Allen," she said quickly, and the girl looked at her, startled at the new name she had been given. "She's had a little difficulty, and at the moment she's without an escort."

"Obviously through no fault of her own," John said quickly. He glanced at Ann and then said impulsively, "Do let me take you dancing, Miss Allen. I'm alone, too." He drew her arm through his and smiled down at her, attracted. And why not? Ann thought.

"I couldn't," the girl said, but her face lighted as John looked down at her. It was plain she longed to blot out the dark stain of social failure, wanted to be seen whirling and dancing and going from one partner to another, and the housemaster could arrange that. If she could be sought after tonight, when nobody knew she was sugar and railroads, the triumph might be endlessly important to her. It might be victory.

"Run along," Ann said, as though she were speaking to a loved and nearly grown daughter twenty years from now. "Have a wonderful time."

The girl had already forgotten Ann as she went laughing down the stone corridor, and Ann, sweeping up the last of the broken glass and settling herself once more behind the punch bowl, did not even care.

The music to which others were dancing no longer haunted her, and the sound of cars coming and going did not make her restless.

In herself, for the first time, she felt the time of year, and it was admittedly early autumn. She was not nineteen and never would be again, but what she had was love and marriage and a reasonably secure future of modest proportions. Gathered together, these made a bright and ample harvest, which she could even afford to share, and as she heard young laughter approaching, she began to ladle out punch, neatly and carefully. ▲▲▲

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The Finger of God

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

among them who had seen the sea. "What is it like?" they asked him. He said: "It is like a big dam. A dam as big as the world. Water as far as the eye can see, and salt. Water that is not worth a curse."

He had it all figured out. There was a weak place in the wire. He looked at the sun. When it was high in the heavens and burning hot, he would slip through. The other prisoners would stage a fight in the far corner. In this heat no one paid much attention to things—not when the sun was so hot that the sentries burned their hands on their rifle barrels. The *Rooineks,* the red necks, as they called the English, could not stand the heat. Of course, he might be shot. But it was not likely. Anyway, in war there was always that chance; he refused to think of it. The next thing was a horse. That was planned too. For a month, ever since he had been taken, he had watched. He had missed nothing.

ALL morning Jan waited. He had the hunter's ability to wait. He watched the sun crossing the burned immensity of the washed-out blue sky. He watched a vulture circling above the camp. At midday he lined up to draw his rations. He ate them calmly. It was *nearly time now.* He watched the sentries standing sleepily; he waited for the raised voices of the quarrel to start. He was still watching the vultures when it began. He heard Du Toit shouting. He saw him hit Piet Swart. He saw Piet fall with Du Toit on top of him. He saw the others run up. The sentries, still lethargic, strolled toward the trouble.

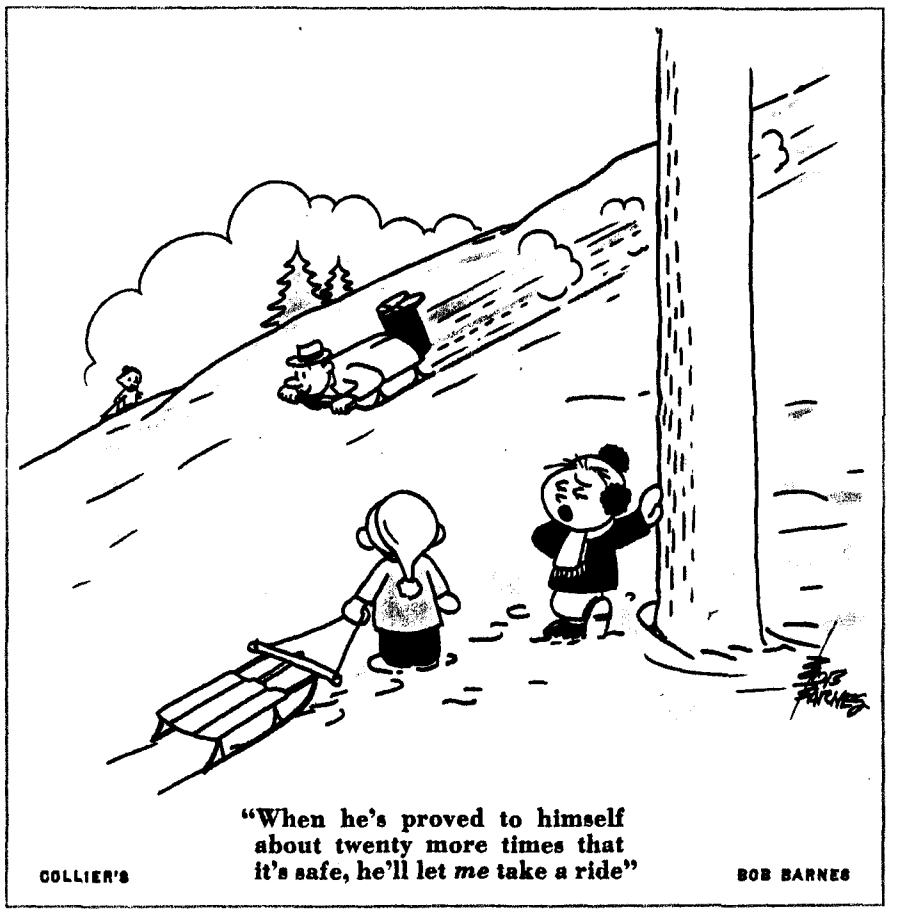
The time had come. Moving quickly, he reached the wire. It took him only a moment to cut the few remaining strands with the cutters he had stolen and to creep through. He was out. Now for the plan. The mistake most people made was to try to get away too fast. Moving slowly now, and easily, he drifted toward the quartermaster's store. This was a big field tent. Another moment and he was inside. Half an hour later he curled up in the nest he had made between a pile of crates. The worst was over.

If, as he hoped, his escape was not discovered until the following morning, if Jannie Moolman was not spotted as missing, they'd figure he was clear away and start after him. They wouldn't begin to look until they were ten or twenty miles away.

During the night he made a foray and collected food for himself from the opened crates and stores on the shelves. He took bully beef and condensed milk and some herrings in tomato sauce. Then he outfitted himself with a nice new British uniform. It made him laugh to himself as he did it. Me, Jannie Moolman a *Rooinek,* he thought. But he could do it. He could play the part. As soon as he had been captured, he had borrowed shaving things and had taken off his beard. The mustache he had left, and he spent much of his time twisting and twirling it, till the ends stood out like a British sergeant major's.

From the very first he had studied their drill, watching them and copying them. He knew how to salute. He knew how to stand at attention, to stand at ease, to salute by turning his head smartly and dropping his hand when he was mounted. His fellow prisoners thought he was mad. *Ja,* mad, but in a very sane way, he thought now. How to pass among the British, that had been the question. Why, like a Britisher—then he would be invisible.

The morning roll call went off smoothly. So he had not been noticed. Next morning, though, when they called the roll again and counted, they discovered he was gone. He heard the bugles blowing, heard orders shouted, and men mounting and riding out. Let them look, he thought, and went to sleep again very comfortably with his head on his old Boer clothes. He stayed hidden three more days. By then they had given him up. He'd even heard the quartermaster say so as he sat in the store doing his paper work: "Got away, that's what he did. Him with a price on his head already. They'll have to put it *up again, and high, if they want to* catch him."



"When he's proved to himself about twenty more times that it's safe, he'll let *me* take a ride"

COLLIER'S — BOB BARNES

THAT was all he needed. As soon as it was dark, he crept out of the tent and walked smartly toward the horse lines. He even knew the horse he wanted—the colonel's bay stallion. It was one that had been captured and could live off the veld, which was more than the big English chargers could do. Fine horses, *ja,* but fine only with twelve pounds of oats a day in their bellies. He had an envelope in his hand. He'd taken it from the office in the front of the store. He walked straight up to the sentry on the horse lines as if he were bringing a written order.

The sentry grounded his rifle to take the paper, and as he took it, Jan's hand closed on his throat. In a second he was gagged; in three minutes he was bound hand and foot and dragged into the forage. Jan then got a saddle and bridle, put them onto the bay, and led him out and mounted. *With the big envelope in* his hand, he rode slowly out of the camp in the direction of headquarters, ten miles away. There was no one about except a sentry on the outpost who, seeing a cavalryman ride by in the moonlight, thought no more of it. An orderly taking a message, he thought, and not in any hurry either.

Once clear, Jan began to canter, turning his horse northward. *"Ja,* my friend," he said, "you are a Boer horse again. A free horse, with less food but all Africa in which to *loop.* Space instead of food." The stallion laid back his ears, flicking them to listen. He seemed glad to hear the Taal again.

Jan laughed to be free, to be riding over the veld again, to be riding toward the mountains. Once in the Waterberg, he was safe unless his own people shot him, thinking he was a British cavalry trooper.

He rode past gutted farmhouses. Their lifeless windows stared out of *broken walls like the eye sockets in a* dead man's skull. The work of the English, all of it, the cattle and horses taken, the houses burned, the women and children sent to camps to be secure against the restless Kaffirs. Boer women were unused to confinement behind wire. It had been done with kindness—if one can burn a man's house and take his cattle kindly, if one can abduct his family with gentleness.

He knew they had done it to break the heart of resistance, to remove points of rest and succor for the tired Boers. It was war. *Ja,* it was war, but it was hard, and many women and children had died. Still, one of these ruined houses would give him shelter. He could hide there and rest, and graze his horse, knee-hobbled, in the night.

He figured he had ridden about sixty miles when he found a place he liked the look of, a burned-out house with a fine view in all directions. Here he could see who was coming and, if he *had to run, would have a good start.*

He dismounted and watered his horse at a little dam below a spring. Then he off-saddled and let his horse roll. When the horse had done, Jan picked up the saddle and led the animal through the front door of the ruin. Inside he found a fallen rafter and put it across the doorframe. "There, my boy," he said. "Now you'll live in a house like a man. Tonight you will graze on the veld, and tomorrow we are on our way to the Waterberg."

He patted the horse's neck. Then he went to explore the house, which was larger than it had seemed from a distance. The horse was in the *voorkamer* —the front hall. There was a doorway to a room on the left and one to the right. They would have been bedrooms. The one on the left had no door, and he went in. It held nothing but some charred remains of furniture and fallen thatch. The right-hand room had a door that fitted badly. He kicked it open and was astonished to see a woman lying on the floor with a child sitting up beside her—a little girl who was all eyes. The woman under the blankets propped herself up on her elbow.

"So, you are back. What do you want now? There is nothing more to take here and little left to burn. *Ja,"* she said savagely, "you can take us. But you will not get far with us. Leave us, leave us to die in our home place. Leave us so that our man, when he comes back, will find our bones."

JAN fell back. Then it came to him: she thought he was a British soldier. "Bring in the others," she said, "bring them all in to watch a Boer woman die."

"Nee," he said, *"nee Mevrou, ek is nie Engels nie.* I am a Boer who has escaped from the British. I am Jannie Moolman."

"Moolman," she said, "Jannie Moolman. The man with a price on his head? The man who blew the bridge at Klipdrift?"

"Ja, I have escaped. You are starving," he said.

"Ja, we are starving. Bring us water. We can walk no longer. Before God," she said, "walk, we cannot even stand." She pointed to a tin cup. He took it to the spring. This was something. *Ja,* this was a devil of a thing. He looked at Waterberg, a blue haze fifty miles to the north. No, not now, now it was five *hundred miles. He went back and gave* water to the child. The woman was too weak even to hold the cup. "Now tell me," he said.

"Ja," she said, "I will tell you. It was a month ago that they came. I saw them coming. They had assegais in their hands."

"Assegais?"

"Ja," she said, "long horse assegais."

"Ah," he said, "lances."

"Ja," she said, "their points glittered in the sun. I knew what they would do, so I took my child and some biltong and rusks, some blankets, and hid in the bush. *Meneer,* I saw them burn my house as I lay and watched. They took the cattle and the horses. In three hours it was done. In three hours, *Meneer,* the work of a lifetime went up in flames. Then we came back. By some accident, my man made the ceiling on this room very thick. It was built to hold against the Kaffirs in the old days. I was his second wife. This was the first room *of the house. Then, when things were* more quiet, he built the other rooms."

"Ja," Jannie Moolman said.

"We lived on what I had saved. I

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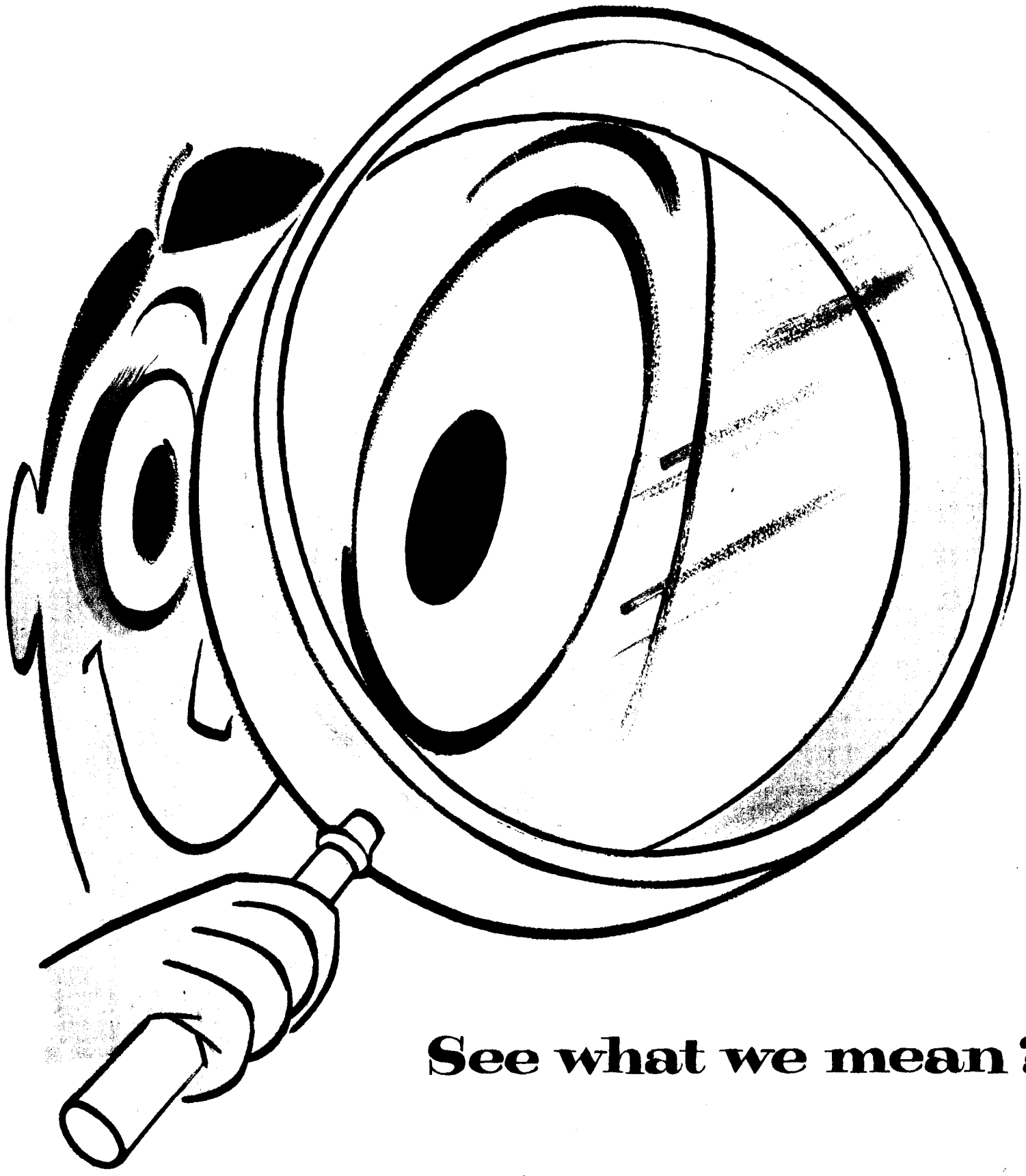

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killed and ate the cats. *Twee mooi katte, Meneer.* I killed them when they came home, with a club. The door was burned, so I took one from the fowl *hock* and hung it here. Then we lived on water. *Meneer,* for fifteen days we have had nothing but water."

"I have no food," Jan said. "I was traveling light. They thought I was an orderly with a message, and so I carried nothing."

"Ja," she said, "you have no food. But there is game here. There are buck."

"Can I catch buck with my hands?" he asked.

"There is a rifle," she said, "and ammunition hidden. I can shoot, but not buck. No, I cannot hunt. Fight, yes—I have fought Kaffirs with my man. A Kaffir comes toward you, but a buck runs away. I tried, *Meneer,* but it was no good, so I saved the ammunition. It was in my heart that the Lord would send someone. A *Rooinek* that I could kill, or a Boer who would save us. Had you come three days ago, before I grew so weak, *Meneer,* you would be dead. *Ja,* I should have shot you dead as you stood in the door."

"Ja," he said. "It is the will of the Lord that I did not escape sooner. It would have been a pity if I had been killed."

"Ja, Meneer, you would be a sad loss. All Africa mourned when we heard you were taken."

"My horse was killed," he said. "A beautiful horse, a black with a star on his forehead. *Mevrou,* I loved that horse."

"Ja," she said.

"Where is the rifle?"

"Here beside me."

THE woman rolled back the blankets. He reached down for the gun. She pushed a bandoleer toward him.

"Clothes," he said. "I suppose there are no clothes."

"There are clothes. My man's clothes are hidden in a box in a cave in the *kloof.* You see," she said, "I wanted to make it clear that there was no man here, that I was alone. But then when they came, I was afraid. It is his Sunday suit."

"Ja," he said. "Then I can burn this uniform. If I am caught dressed like this, and armed, they will shoot me."

"Ja," she said.

"It will give me much pleasure to burn it," he said. "But not the shirt and the boots."

"No," she said.

"I am going now," he said. "I shall come back with meat."

"The Lord protect you," she said.

He found the cave in the *kloof.* He found the box, and changed. It made him laugh to think of himself clean-shaven and in her man's Sunday suit. It was a rusty black, with a long-tailed coat, and there was also a top hat bound with crepe. He slung the bandoleer around his shoulder. Jannie Moolman had vanished, or would have as soon as he burned the uniform.

Now for the meat. Less than a mile away, he saw a small herd of springbok. They were grazing quietly. Moving carefully, he got to within three hundred yards, and, sitting down, took careful aim and fired. He brought a nice buck down, and, going back for his horse, he put the carcass on the saddle, fastening it with the horse's head rope. He mounted and rode back. It did not take long to dress the meat. Now at least they had food. But the woman and the child must not have too much, starving as they were. He made broth and fed them a few spoonfuls. He kept the fire going and fed them every couple of hours.

Next day they were both stronger. The little girl, Sannie, was on her feet again, and her mother could sit up. His plight began to worry her. "You must go on," she said. "We can manage now."

"How can I go on?" he said. "You have food only for two days. Without salt, in this heat, the meat will go bad, even in the shade. No, I will stay and hunt for you until you can travel. Then you must ride my horse, and I will get you into the mountains."

"It will take time," the woman said.

"Ja, it will take time," he said. "But we have time. In all the world, time and air and water are the only things that cost nothing. They are the gift of God."

"You are the gift of God, *Meneer,"* she said.

"I was sent," he said. "It is in my heart that I was sent."

Jacoba de Wet was her name. She had blue eyes and blonde hair and was not more than twenty-five. The child resembled her, was a tiny copy, a miniature, of her mother.

In a week he had them both up. Every day he shot buck and picked wild spinach from the abandoned lands. He found some apricot trees in fruit. He found a guinea fowl's nest with fresh eggs. He trapped small birds for variety and was satisfied with his patients' progress. In a few days now they would be off. Once in the mountains, they would find other people. Women and children and old men living among the rocks like baboons, but free—freedom, that was what counted.

HE WENT to the room where Jacoba de Wet was cooking. She was well enough to do that now. The child was playing beside her. "Well," he said, "two more days and I think we can be off."

"How long will it take us, do you think?"

"Two days," he said. "We should be able to do twenty-five miles a day."

"And you?" she asked. "You will walk?"

"Ja, I will walk beside you and the child."

"You are a good man," she said. Then she went on, "My man is dead."

"But you said when I came—"

"I said that because I did not wish to believe he was dead. Those were lies. *Ja,"* she said, "he was killed at Modder River. A fine man, he was, a brave man. That is why I wanted to stay. I could have managed, but now—"

"We will find people," he said vaguely.

She suddenly seemed beautiful to him. She had always seemed beautiful, with her blue eyes and blonde hair, but he had put the thought away from him till she had told him of her husband's death. As a hunter he had had to be free, to be able to move swiftly and to take great risks. Ivory hunting was no

COLLIER'S

"I don't think I could stand looking at the same old face across the breakfast table every afternoon"

JOHN RUGE

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COLLIER'S **"I woke up with chills and fever and headache and sore throat and earache and upset stomach—but it didn't work"** STAN FINE

child's game. But now? Anyway, it was too soon to think of such things, but the thought was in his mind. And he had grown to love the child. Besides, what could they do alone?

He brought wood for the fire, and as he put it down, the little girl ran in. "Men are coming. Men on horses!" she said. Jan went to the door. There were men, a detachment of British lancers. They were so near that he could hear the rattle and clash of their equipment. He adjusted his top hat, smoothed down his tail coat, and went to meet them.

A YOUNG officer, on a smart strawberry roan mare, rode forward. Very politely Jan took off his hat, put his hand on his stomach, and bowed. "Sir," he said in English, "I never thought to welcome one of your race, but the times change, and I, being a man of perception, change with the times. In the house, in what is left of the house, after the improvements effected by your cavalry, lies a sick woman and a child. They need food. Bread, tea and sugar. Perhaps you can spare her some?"

"You talk English well," the officer complimented him.

"*Ja,*" Jan said, "it is my good fortune to be well educated. *Ja, Meneer,* I am a very lucky man." He thought of his escape and the fact that Jacoba de Wet had been too sick to shoot him.

"I am going into the house," the officer said. "Corporal Brown, come with me. Bring two men." The corporal came with two troopers. They carried carbines in their hands.

"Enter," Moolman said. "We can offer you little hospitality, partly because you are enemies, but mostly because, as enemies, you have destroyed a poor woman's possessions. But we have water—very fine, clear water with no trace of *brak.*"

The officer said nothing.

Jacoba de Wet met them, holding the child by the hand.

"The English are back again, *Mevrou,*" Jan said.

"So I see. What do they want?"

"What does she say?" the officer said.

"She says, 'What do you want?' "

"We saw smoke," the officer said.

"Smoke to the British is like honey to the bee," Jan said.

"This area is supposed to be cleared."

"*Ja, Meneer,* that is one word. Devastated is another."

The officer looked at the springbok hanging from a nail in the wall. He went up to it. "Shot," he said.

"Someone else shot it," Moolman said. "I was lucky to find it before the *asvoëls.*"

"Yes," the officer said. "Someone shot it with that Mauser." He looked at the rifle Jacoba was trying to hide. Then he looked at Jan. "I've seen you before somewhere. Your eyes." He stared at him, looked him up and down. "Five, seven," he went on, "slim, dark eyes, talks English well, mustache—but that could be quickly shaved. By God, you're Moolman!" He began to laugh. "Corporal Brown, arrest this man! You are Moolman who escaped! And to think it was a fortnight or so ago I saw you in camp."

"What discernment, *Meneer!* Has the reward been increased? A reward is very flattering."

"You escaped in a British uniform."

"Did I? I wonder where it is? If I did, I mean."

"If we find it, I'll shoot you," the young officer said. He was very fierce now, angry.

"*Ja, Meneer,*" Jan said, "that is the rule of war."

Then the officer said, "Why are you here? You have a horse; you should have been clear away."

"*Ja,*" Jan said, "I should have been. But unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, when I got here I found this woman and her child on the point of death. I have been hunting for them. But tomorrow we should have been gone." He looked at the Waterberg again. How far the mountains had receded in the last hour.

"Is this true?" the officer asked.

"It is true."

"Corporal, call De Beer."

De Beer came. He was a Cape Boer, one of those who had gone with the English. "De Beer, question this woman," the officer said.

Jacoba de Wet told her story.

"Is it true?" the officer asked.

"I think it is true. The stories tally, and she can speak no English," De Beer said.

"Moolman," the officer said, "I do not like this business; many of us don't. We are soldiers. We do not like burning farms, deporting women and children and stealing stock."

"It is possible that there are good Englishmen," Moolman said. And he thought: This boy, for instance, does not seem so bad, and he is a hunter. Hunters are different, anyway. That angle about the uniform could be a ruse—something to give the soldiers to talk about.

THE officer ignored his remark. Sannie came and stood beside Moolman, clutching his leg in her arms.

"Come outside," the officer said. "If I let you go, will you give me your word not to fight against us again?"

"If you took me, I should not be able to fight, so I will say yes." Sannie had followed him out. He stroked her hair, fondling it the way a man fondles a dog's ears, or a horse.

"If this is found out, I shall be court-martialed," the officer said.

"I understand."

"Very well. I cannot let you go, but you might manage to escape with the woman and the child. You could steal a second horse."

"*Ja,* I could do that."

"And if some rations were left out, you could steal those too."

"*Meneer,*" Moolman said, "I am an expert thief."

"Tonight," the officer said, "I will stable my horse in the house with yours and sleep here myself. I am very tired and shall sleep soundly. The men will camp by the *kraal.*"

"It is a good plan, *Meneer.* Can I go and tell *Mevrou* de Wet?"

"You can go."

He found her cooking some food the soldiers had given her. "Well, Jan," she said, "this is the end."

"No, Jacoba, the beginning. Tonight we shall escape. It is arranged. I shall have horses."

"How?"

"The officer is going to let us go, let us escape."

"Why, Jan?"

"Why? Because he is a good young man and sees in this the finger of God. He is a hunter like me. He is sick of destruction and perhaps wants to make up for some of the harm he has done. I had to promise to fight no more."

"You promised?"

"*Ja,* Jacoba. I could not have escaped again, and although I would say it to no one else, we are beaten. Honorably beaten. What we have done—a handful of burghers against an empire—has astonished the world, and there it ends. No people could have done more. None in the history of the world has done so much."

"And then?" she asked. "We?"

He said, "We—we will live in the mountains until it is over, and then we shall come back here and I will help you rebuild what has been destroyed."

It was too soon to say more, to tell her of Francina, his old love. It was too soon to say that God had sent her to him, her and Sannie, to replace what had been lost to him so long ago. So he said, "Are you willing, Jacoba?"

"*Ja,* Jan," she said, "in this I see the finger of God, and who am I to turn away when He points?"

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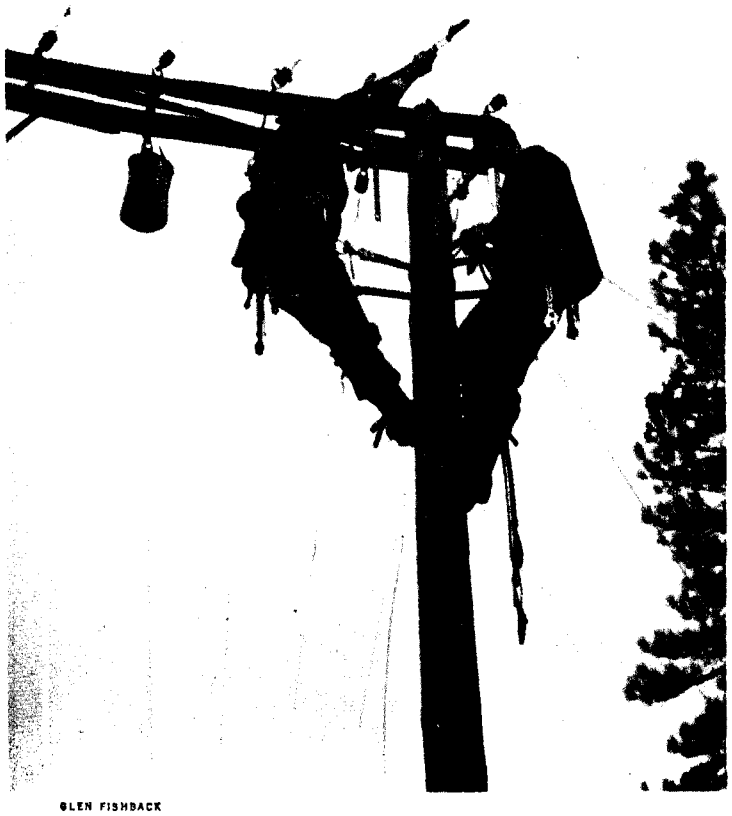
RALPH ROYLE

Telephone exchange at Almond, N. Y., located in private home, is typical of small-town independent phone company. Dial system recently replaced old switchboard operated by Mabel McIntosh. Lineman Alonzo Dennison tests circuit

5,000 WAYS TO

By BILL DAVIDSON



GLEN FISHBACK

Linemen of independent at Weaverville, Cal., repair wires. The firm now has 1,600 phones

IN THE early hours of a chill February morning, a Bell telephone operator in Watertown, New York, received an anguished call from the operator of a tiny independent telephone company in nearby Cape Vincent. The Cape Vincent operator shrilled, "We're on fire—everything going up in flames! Send help!" And the line went dead.

The Watertown operator called a plant chief of the huge New York Telephone Company, a member of the nation-wide Bell System. He rushed to Cape Vincent to find the center of the village gutted, the telephone exchange in ashes, and no communications available for the fire fighters, doctors and other emergency services. The plant chief put in a call to New York Telephone Company executive Edward V. Moran in Albany.

The New York Telephone Company has no stake in the little independent. Nevertheless, Moran went to work like a commanding general in an Army headquarters.

Another little independent telephone company in Manlius, New York, 80 miles from Cape Vincent, had just cut over to dial service and hadn't yet dismantled its old two-ton switchboard, which was like the one destroyed at Cape Vincent. Moran rushed a truck and crew over the icy roads to Manlius. His men loaded the ponderous switchboard onto the truck with block and tackle, and sped for Cape Vincent. They arrived at 7:00 P.M., and went to work installing the board. Less than 24 hours after the fire started, complete telephone service was restored.

The owner of the Cape Vincent Telephone Company, Mrs. Frances P. Ross, later wrote to Moran's division representative: "It still seems a miracle . . . I cannot contemplate what my problems would have been without your help."

Two elements of this story may puzzle many readers. First, fairly few people, especially city dwellers, realize that thousands of independent telephone companies exist in this country, side by side with the 21 multimillion-dollar giants of the familiar Bell System. Most of the independents are tiny one-man and husband-and-wife affairs, but a few, like the 200,000-phone Rochester (New York) Telephone Corporation, are fairly good-sized.

Second, some Americans have the impression that big business is a voracious monster set on gobbling up little business; the events at Cape Vincent certainly don't bear out that belief.

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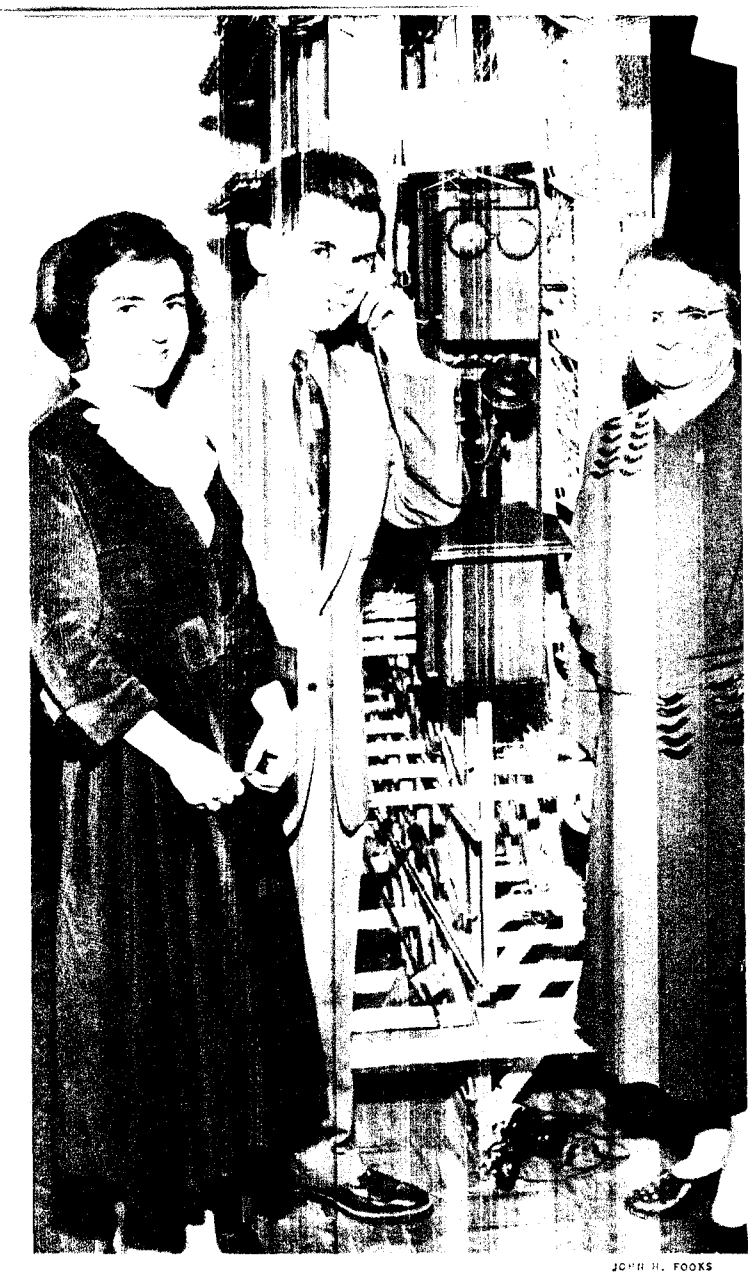
WATERTOWN DAILY TIMES

Fire in 1948 burned downtown section of Cape Vincent, N.Y., leveling private phone building. Bell's New York company rushed in crews, delivered switchboard, restored service in 24 hours



JOHN H. FOOKS

J. A. Clary, head of Marcellus, N.Y., firm, with wife and mother, gives dial change-over order

MAKE A PHONE CALL

There are that many—and more—independent telephone companies still in operation in the United States. Aided by the vast Bell System, the little fellows actually are expanding to give big-city-type service

The Cape Vincent story is not unique, or even unusual; other versions of the story occurred last year in California, Iowa and Ohio. Time after time, the big Bell System companies have rushed to the rescue of independents after disastrous floods or storms, or have offered them thousands of dollars' worth of free technical and administrative aid in less troubled times. "To my knowledge," Hamilton A. Cunningham, executive secretary of the New York State Telephone Association, told me, "it's the only industry in the world where such free offer of the helping hand exists."

Cunningham's phrase, "the helping hand," was a happy choice; it best describes the relations I found all over the country between Bell and the little companies which might, under other circumstances, have been its competitors. But why is that? Why, instead of swallowing up the tiny independents, does the great Bell System go out of its way to lend them a helping hand?

The answer lies partly in the nature of the independent companies, which are anchored deep in the bedrock of our folkways. Most of them started in rural areas in the late 1890s and early 1900s. The big Bell companies were busy consolidating their hold on the cities; if a group of farmers wanted telephone service, they merely got together, contributed ten dollars each and bought wire and telephones. Then, often with an outdoor community party to mark the event, they cut chestnut poles from the woods and strung the line from farmhouse to farmhouse.

In many communities, an enterprising citizen later bought up several of these farmers' switching lines, as they were called, tying them together with a switchboard which generally was run by his wife, perhaps in her kitchen. The new owner—often the village feed merchant or hardware-store proprietor—was his own repairman, telephone installer, pole climber, bill collector and night operator.

He became the most rugged of rugged individualists, remaining aloof from the mighty Bell System, except when he put through a long-distance call. The local telephone office became the nerve center of the town. The local operator knew what everyone was doing, and she dispensed her information to anyone who might inquire—and in time of emergency, her services were invaluable.

Rural America still has 60,000 of the old cooperative farmers' switching lines and 5,435 privately owned independents; between them, they operate 8,222,800 phones—some 1,750,000 of them the old-fashioned, hand-cranked magneto type. It's not surprising that the old traditions have survived, along with the old equipment.

In the little town of Holcomb, New York, I heard operator Martha McKay answer a ring with, "I just saw him go up to the lake with a fish pole, so I don't think his phone will answer until about six o'clock, when he generally gets back." Meanwhile, the other operator, Monica Flanagan, was passing out information like, "Yes, there will be a dance at Baptist Hill on Saturday," and "Mr. So-and-so hasn't died yet, but he's very sick and if he passes tonight, as the doctor expects, the funeral will be on Friday." The girls also took messages for the doctor, the deputy sheriff and a man named Harry Shappee, who is the local artificial inseminater of cattle. (They had to take the messages for Shappee because the five-mile line to his establishment was out. In almost every case, the embarrassed farmer called his wife to the phone to discuss his cows' mating requirements with the operators.)

The most dramatic demonstration I saw of the personal service still rendered by the country tele-

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Many private phone companies are family-owned. They know their responsibilities.

phone switchboard took place in Margaretville, New York. The local electrician was called out on an emergency job late one evening. His wife wasn't home and he had no baby sitter to watch his three young children, so he called operator Barbara Shultis. "Barbara," he said, "I'm going to leave my telephone off the hook near the babies' room. Would you listen in once in a while, and if you hear them cry, call me at the Graham house?"

The 1,000-phone Margaretville system is a typical independent operation. Its president, slim, handsome Sheldon Birdsell, was born into the company. While Sheldon was going to high school, he worked as the night operator, doing his homework at the switchboard; during his years at college, he spent all his vacations at home, climbing poles and repairing the thirty miles of lines over bear-infested mountains. When Sheldon Birdsell's father died in 1932, his mother took over management of the company, and when his mother died in 1943, Sheldon became boss.

On March 2, 1947, the company's lines were wiped out by a severe blizzard. Birdsell organized his two linemen, picked up four volunteers from the village, borrowed snowshoes from the State Conservation Department, and set out to restore the lines. Countless lives depended on the system; the injured, freezing and starving had to get through to doctors and the Red Cross.

Working their way over the mountains through 10-foot snowdrifts, the men became so exhausted that Birdsell had to send them out in teams of two, so one man could give the alarm in case his teammate collapsed. Even so, one Bell System lineman, Harry Winchell, was so convinced he was a goner at one point that he scribbled his will in a notebook, ending, "If I never get to the next pole, this is it. If I get to the next pole, I have some more to write." Fortunately, he was able to stagger back to civilization without adding any codicils to his will.

The men put into farmhouses to eat and sleep, after working by portable floodlight until past eleven each night. Birdsell ferried supplies back and forth, and Mrs. Birdsell tended the switchboard 24 hours a day, while she attempted to keep her baby alive in a house heated by a single wood stove. By Wednesday, three days after the storm, nearly all local calls were going through. By Friday, Margaretville once again was connected with the outside world.

Cases of personal heroism are so numerous in the independent phone service that subscribers take them pretty much for granted. In North Anson, Maine, a famous independent named Kenton E. Quint crippled his knee in a 1943 sleet storm and went around for two months on crutches, calmly repairing his lines. (Quint is best known for the time he rushed into a neighbor's flaming home to rescue a telephone instrument that was worth $30.)

The old-timers' devotion to duty is matched by the newcomers. The Citizens Telephone Company of Bridgman, Michigan, for example, is owned by D. M. Davis and his son, Lieutenant Colonel John E. Davis, a Silver Star winner who lost both feet in Germany in World War II. Young Davis saved the money to help buy the company while he lay in Army hospitals for three years after the war; today he is the assistant manager under his father, with his brother working as a foreman, his mother as traffic supervisor and his sister as night operator. Last year, when a freight-train wreck at Sawyer ripped up all the company's lines in the area, the wreckage swarmed with Davises until they had run an insulated wire around the wreck and restored service.

Men like the Davises, Quint and Birdsell are merely the latest upholders of a long and honorable tradition. No one observing the operations of today's independents can be surprised that they were able to hold their own with the Bell System in the early days of the telephone industry. Perhaps they would not have fared so well when Bell became stronger—if the giant phone system had not voluntarily guaranteed the independence of the thousands of small companies in a 1913 commitment under which the American Telephone & Telegraph Company agreed not to take over the territory of any independent that was offering its subscribers adequate service.

This virtual freezing of the *status quo,* coming at a time when other large companies were expanding frantically, amazed the business world, and there is controversy to this day over the reasons for it. In the background, undoubtedly, was a desire to free the industry of any antitrust-law taint and to foil any future government nationalization attempts (it is much more difficult to nationalize 5,000 small businesses than one big one). But more than that, the big Bell companies obviously realized that the basic strength of the industry lay in the fierce American pride of small-business ownership among the independents; a man and his family would work twenty-four hours a day, if necessary, to keep *their* company going—and, operating among their own neighbors, they probably could give better and less costly service than the big impersonal Bell System companies.

The A.T.&T.'s commitment was conscientiously observed, and the independents continued their belligerently proud existence throughout World War II.

But then there was trouble. The economic adjustments of the postwar period were especially difficult for small phone companies, and many of them would have gone under if it hadn't been for the vigorous helping hand offered by the Bell System.

The problem was simple, even if the solution wasn't: a severe shortage of modern equipment had developed at a time when subscribers were increasing and the demand for up-to-date service was becoming impossible to ignore.

Nearly all the independents had come through the war with old-fashioned hand-cranked magneto telephones, ponderous old switchboards, and patched and repatched lines that lay, in places, on the ground and on barn roofs and fences. When the boys and girls of rural America came back from the armed forces and war industries they weren't satisfied. They wanted the kind of phone service they had seen in the cities. Meanwhile, industrial areas and suburbs expanded, and ex-city dwellers moved into the country. They, too, insisted on the city service they were used to.

In some cases, the poor little independent telephone companies were thoroughly overwhelmed. The owner of the tiny Sanborn Home Telephone Company, near Niagara Falls, had poked along for nearly 50 years serving 200 rural families; suddenly an immense Bell aircraft plant was plunked down right in the middle of his territory, demanding that he handle thousands of phone calls a day through his little switchboard.

A Problem in High Finance

For the independent telephone man, the problem seemed insurmountable. His only solution was to string new wires, install new phones and convert his entire plant to a modern, economical automatic dial system, like the big-city phones. But such a conversion costs from as little as $25,000 to more than $500,000, and the local telephone man, like the local grocer, could get no more than a small-business loan of a few thousand dollars from the local bank. Where was he to get $500,000?

Part of the answer was provided by the Rural Telephone Loan Act, passed by Congress in 1949, which allows the small independent to borrow money from the federal government's Rural Electrification Administration. But by then an even better solution had developed, free of any possible federal encroachment, and relying to a great degree on that old stand-by of the independents, the helping hand of the Bell System. Called the New York Plan, it originated with the Public Service Commission of that state, an able body headed by former state Senate majority leader Benjamin F. Feinberg, of Plattsburg.

One of New York's five Public Service commissioners is a brilliant little pepper pot named Spencer B. Eddy, a native of a hamlet called Eddy's Corners who got to know the importance of rural telephones early in life when illness struck the family, and his father had to summon medical aid by horseback. With the backing of Feinberg and Governor Thomas E. Dewey, Eddy went to the big banks of his state and said, "We're sick of people talking about free enterprise and doing nothing to save it. Unless you want us to support legislation allowing federal financing for the independents, the New York banks must provide the money."

Behind this tough talk, Eddy had some real inducements for the banks. He promised that the Public Service Commission would investigate the stability of each company before approving a loan, thus practically guaranteeing

NEXT WEEK

We're Selling Out Our Disabled VETERANS!

Politics and ineptitude endanger the lives of VA hospital patients

My Father's CHILD

By PAUL HORGAN

The story of a moving encounter with Lincoln in the midst of war

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BROADWAY'S BUSIEST BABE

Helen Gallagher, new show star, still spends hours at her classes

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When disaster strikes, the whole clan pitches in to get the lines humming again

efficient, profitable management, and saving the lending institution the expense of an investigation of its own. Equally important, the big New York Telephone Company, which relied on the smaller companies to handle many of its long-distance calls, was ready to give independents all the free engineering and administrative assistance they needed in their modernization program.

After talks with Eddy, three New York banks came into the plan, then several small insurance companies, and finally the powerful, influential Chase National Bank. Loans to independent telephone companies became fashionable, and various versions of the New York Plan swept the country, enabling the independents to weather their severest storm.

In Lancaster, South Carolina, Frank Barnes's Lancaster Telephone Company had been nearly swamped by industrial growth in the area; today, the company has nearly trebled in size. The nearby Matthews & Waxhaw Telephone Company, Inc., in North Carolina, most of whose wires were lying on the ground after the war, now is a thriving outfit giving good service to its 450 subscribers. John Cheesman's West Point Telephone Company in Westpoint, Indiana (243 customers), has converted its whole system to dial. So has the Pymatuning Independent Telephone Company in Pennsylvania, which serves 350 subscribers.

In Weaverville, California, W. Gilman Snyder's Western Telephone Company has grown from a 57-phone, $3,000 weakling to a 1,600-phone, $390,000 stalwart.

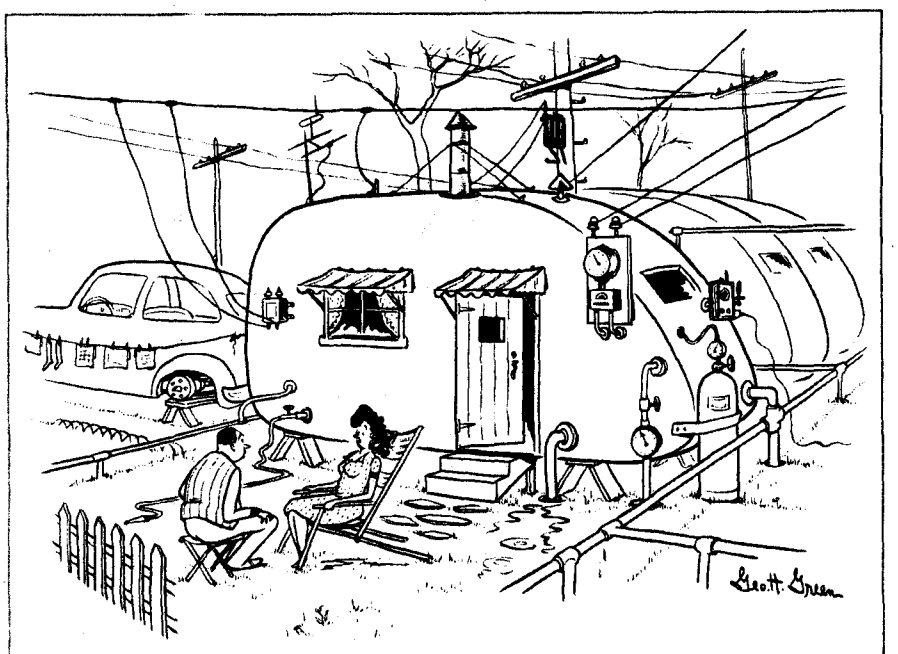
Snyder is using his Chase National Bank loan not only to install dials, but to bridge vast mountain distances with a microwave radio system.

Furious Subscribers Protest

In Alfred, New York, William Bradford Harrison's Allegany Telephone Company, Inc., was so successful that Harrison was asked to run the nearby Seneca-Gorham Telephone Corporation, which could not get the Public Service Commission to approve its loan without a change in management. I was with Harrison when he had his first meeting with the Seneca-Gorham subscribers, all of them furious over the kind of service they had been getting. "There's so much fallen telephone wire lying on the ground," said Dr. F. M. Chaffee, "that we ought to electrify it to fence in our cattle."

After listening to the bitter complaints for more than an hour, Harrison pulled out a blueprint of a completely new telephone system engineered for him without charge by L. C. Denison of the Elmira office of the New York Telephone Company. As the crowd looked at the plan for the new, modernized Seneca-Gorham Company, the protests died down. When the meeting was over, a prominent local farmer, Charles Sturm, said to me, "This is the first hope we've had in twenty years."

Bell assistance takes various forms. When Frank A. Kelly, Sr., became seriously ill a few years ago, he had to turn his Berkshire Telephone Corporation (Kinderhook, N.Y.) over to his sons, Frank, Jr., and Jack, both proficient engineers but neophytes at running a business. In a regulated utility, where the incorrect filing of business forms



COLLIER'S — **"Remember the good old days when you could move from one place to another merely by telephoning for a moving van?"** — GEORGE HAMILTON GREEN

can put a company out of business, their unfamiliarity with operating procedures could have been disastrous. But the New York Telephone Company's Edward V. Moran, hero of the Cape Vincent emergency, stepped in. Working with Cliff Sayer, president of the neighboring independent Columbia & Rensselaer Telephone Corporation, Moran practically ran the legal end of the Kelly company until Frank, Sr., was back on his feet again.

Two years ago, 78-year-old F. Scott Rose went to see Moran and asked to have the New York Telephone Company take over his Middleburgh Telephone Company. "I'm too old to climb poles and run the business," said Rose.

"Don't you have anyone in your family who can take over?" Moran said.

"No one but my young son-in-law, Randy Becker," said Rose, "and he's a short-order cook, not a telephone man."

"Well," said Moran, "if you have confidence in him, we'll *make* a telephone man out of him." And they did. The Bell Company sent its best engineering and administrative brains to Middleburg to work with the twenty-six-year-old Becker, helped him put his affairs in shape so he could get a loan through the Chase National Bank, and saw to it that the best contractors went to work on a company modernization program. On April 1, 1953, the new, modern Middleburgh Telephone Company, Inc.—Randall Becker, vice-president and general manager—will cut over to a profitable, up-to-date dial operation.

These cutovers are the most striking evidence of what the helping hand of the Bell System has done. They are taking place all over the United States, generally celebrated by a party in which all the townspeople take part. I attended a cutover party in Marcellus, New York, recently; it was curiously symbolic of the change from the old to the new.

COLLIER'S — **"Just like the new Delta Wing Jets! How did you ever think of it, Pop?"** — CHARLES PEARSON

A Widow's Courageous Battle

The owner of the local Finger Lakes Telephone Corporation is a motherly ex-telephone operator named Mrs. Mary Clary, whose husband died a year and a half after they bought the company in 1925. Her son, Jim, was only one year old at the time, and she struggled to hold on to the company until he was old enough to take it over. Now, Jim had been graduated from Holy Cross College, and had undertaken the monumental magneto-to-dial conversion job. The new system was installed with the help of Commissioner Eddy and the New York Telephone Company and a dozen other helping hands, and all the neighbors turned out at midnight to celebrate the switchover.

First, Mayor Varnum S. Kenyon pulled the cords that disconnected the old switchboard. Then, while the neighbors gathered around banks of flowers in the new office, Mrs. Clary made the first phone call, to eighty-year-old "Grandma" Clary, her husband's mother, in Baldwinsville, New York. Mrs. Clary, blinking nervously, said, "Hello, hello, Gram? How do you hear me? I can hear you perfectly. Isn't it wonderful, just wonderful?" The neighbors cheered.

Then the Reverend M. Dennis Lee, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, improvised a little prayer: "O God, Thou hast taught us that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth from Thy mouth. We thank Thee that Thou hast given us this means of communication, by which we may be bound together in brotherhood, through understanding." The neighbors said, "Amen," and sat down to a supper of ham, turkey, tomatoes, cookies and coffee.

In the old office a block away, gray-haired Mary McAvoy, operator for 26 years, sat over her now-silent switchboard. Her job had been taken over by a machine, she had received a substantial separation allowance and was going to Syracuse to look for another job. Both the Finger Lakes and Bell companies had offered to help her find a place with some business concern. "It's all over," she said, "and it's been such a long time. Why, that boy Jimmy grew up with me." She picked up her old-fashioned operator's mouthpiece, a souvenir which she was planning to use at home as a little vase for flowers, and she got up to go. "I don't know," she said. "Machines or no machines, these little small-town telephone companies will never change."

She was right. With the old magneto system, every phone on a Finger Lakes party line rang whenever there was a call for anyone on the line; with the new dial setup, only the individual phones rang. But within two days the farmers learned that if they placed the new phone on an inverted dishpan, it would magnify the vibration set up when their neighbors' party-line phones rang. Then they could take the phone off the hook and listen in—just as they had for the last 50 years. ▲▲▲

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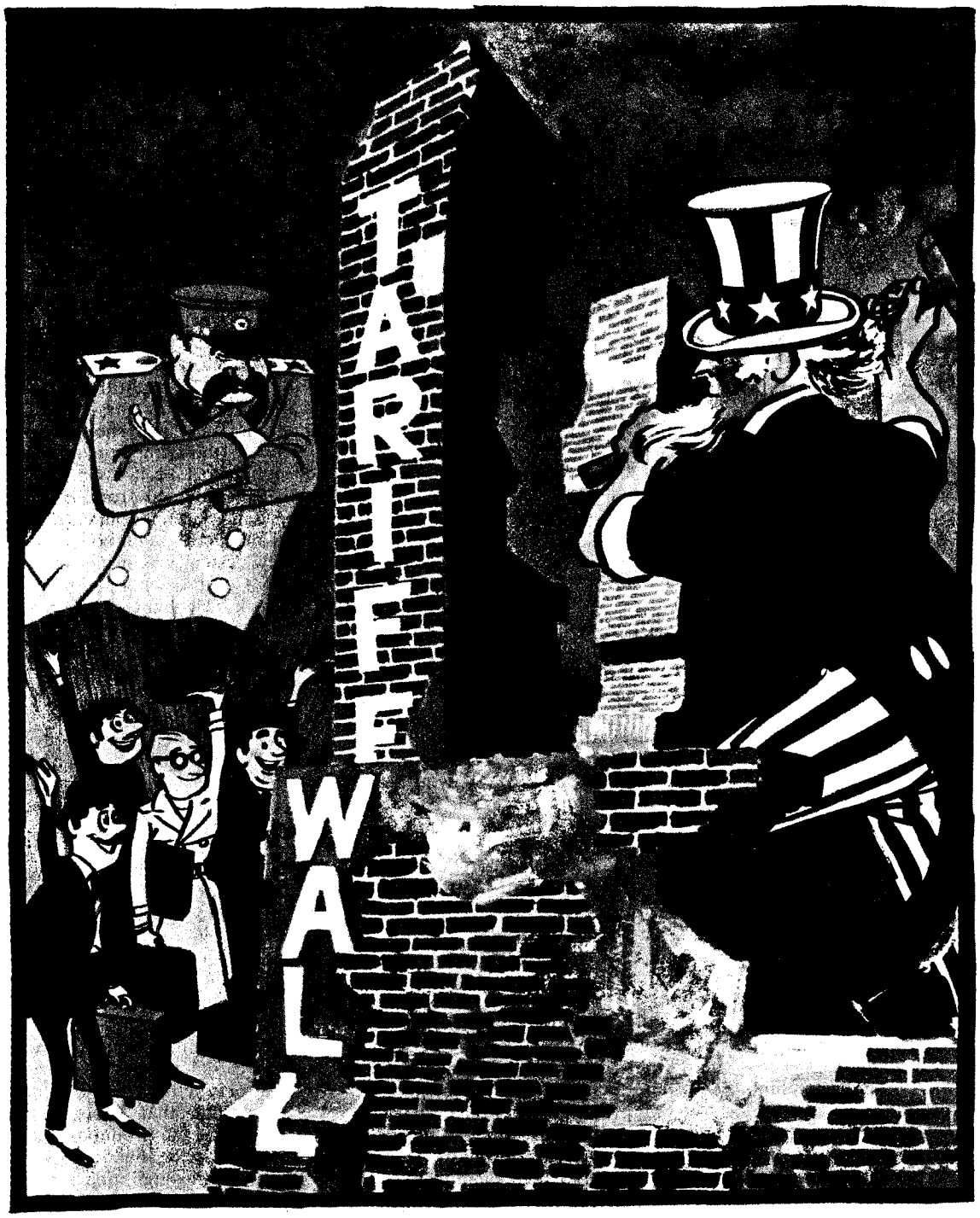

HARRY DEVLIN

Barriers to Western Unity

PREMIER STALIN'S 1952 Christmas greeting to the free world was another of his occasional assurances that capitalism and Communism can live peaceably side by side. These cheery messages never come through diplomatic channels, where they might start some action, but are always given to private individuals or the foreign press. (The journalist who got the latest message was James Reston of the New York Times.) But, as usual, Stalin created a good bit of excitement and again aroused some hope that this time he meant it.

We don't mean to be cynical. But, in view of the record, we have to put more reliance in a Stalin manuscript, written for home consumption, which appeared in the magazine Bolshevik. It was a major policy pronouncement and, unfortunately, more in character than Stalin's answers to Mr. Reston's questions.

Capitalism, the dictator explained to the home folks, is characterized by a struggle for world markets. And the only way for capitalism to find markets, use up its surpluses and stimulate its economy is through war. That, he says, is what brought on World War II. He was saying the same thing, of course, back in the days of the Nazi-Soviet alliance, before Hitler's attack on Russia produced the interval of common effort with the United States and Britain, and caused Stalin to discover that the Soviet Union was a "freedom-loving democracy."

Today, Stalin insists, the struggle for markets goes on, and the basic conflict is as great as ever. So he concludes that war is inevitable—but war among the capitalist powers, and not against the Soviet Union.

His prediction is clearly a case of the wish fathering the thought. And there are essential flaws in Stalin's logic, because his devotion to Marx's century-old theories sometimes clouds his vision of present realities. Marx believed that capitalism tends to put more and more wealth in fewer and fewer hands. He believed that the exploited proletariat of the West would erupt in a sudden, violent revolution. Stalin still seems to believe this.

The evidence is to the contrary, especially in the United States, where Stalin finds his most powerful opposition to world conquest. Capitalism has diffused wealth, as is proved by the increasing millions of American "proletarians" who own stock in capitalistic corporations. And the "revolution" has been of a generally peaceful and long-term variety, in which organized labor has gained ever-widening objectives through collective bargaining.

The free world is stronger economically than the Kremlin thinks. But it also has some obvious weaknesses. And we may be assured that Stalin is using every nonmilitary weapon at his command—trade, propaganda, anything—to exploit those weaknesses, foment friction among the Western nations, and gain a victory without general war.

Most of the West's weaknesses stem from disunity, and perhaps the most dangerous example of disunity is in the field of international trade. It should be remembered, in this connection, that the Iron Curtain is an economic as well as a political device. It keeps the enslaved Soviet people in, but it also keeps Western trade out. And the Soviet empire, with its vast territory and natural resources, can much better afford to play this game of wait-and-see than the free but disunited world.

Last November, Collier's published an editorial supporting the idea of "Trade, Not Aid," and urging fewer tariff restrictions. A good many readers disagreed with us, and said so. We hope that those readers will do a little thinking about Stalin's aims and policies, and realize that there is nothing that would suit his purposes better than a hedge of high tariffs and a consequent decline of trade in the West.

We are glad to see that the new administration apparently favors the "Trade, Not Aid" approach, and we hope that the nation will back up such a policy. The countries that oppose Communism must draw closer together. They must lower, not raise, trade barriers. They must cultivate friendly relations and mutual understanding. These are freedom's best and least expensive weapons in the cold war.

Pay More to Save More

THREE YEARS AGO we suggested, on this page, that congressmen are underpaid. Now the National Committee for Strengthening Congress, a group of private citizens, also suggests they are underpaid. But Representative Usher L. Burdick of North Dakota disagrees.

A lot of people are having trouble making ends meet these days, says Mr. Burdick, and if a congressman can't do it on $15,000 a year he had better trim his living standards or resign.

After 14 years in Washington, Mr. Burdick must surely agree that a congressman's responsibilities are great. He must also know that there are thousands of positions in private life that pay far more for much less important duties.

The biggest business in the free world, which is the United States government, needs the country's top talent. It shouldn't be forced to take second-raters, and it shouldn't ask the members of Congress to make financial sacrifices for the burdensome job of helping to run that business. We do not consider it a paradox to urge higher pay for members of Congress as an early step toward a more efficient and economical operation of the government.

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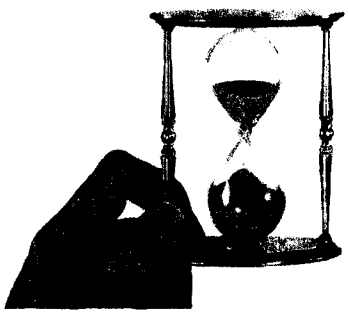

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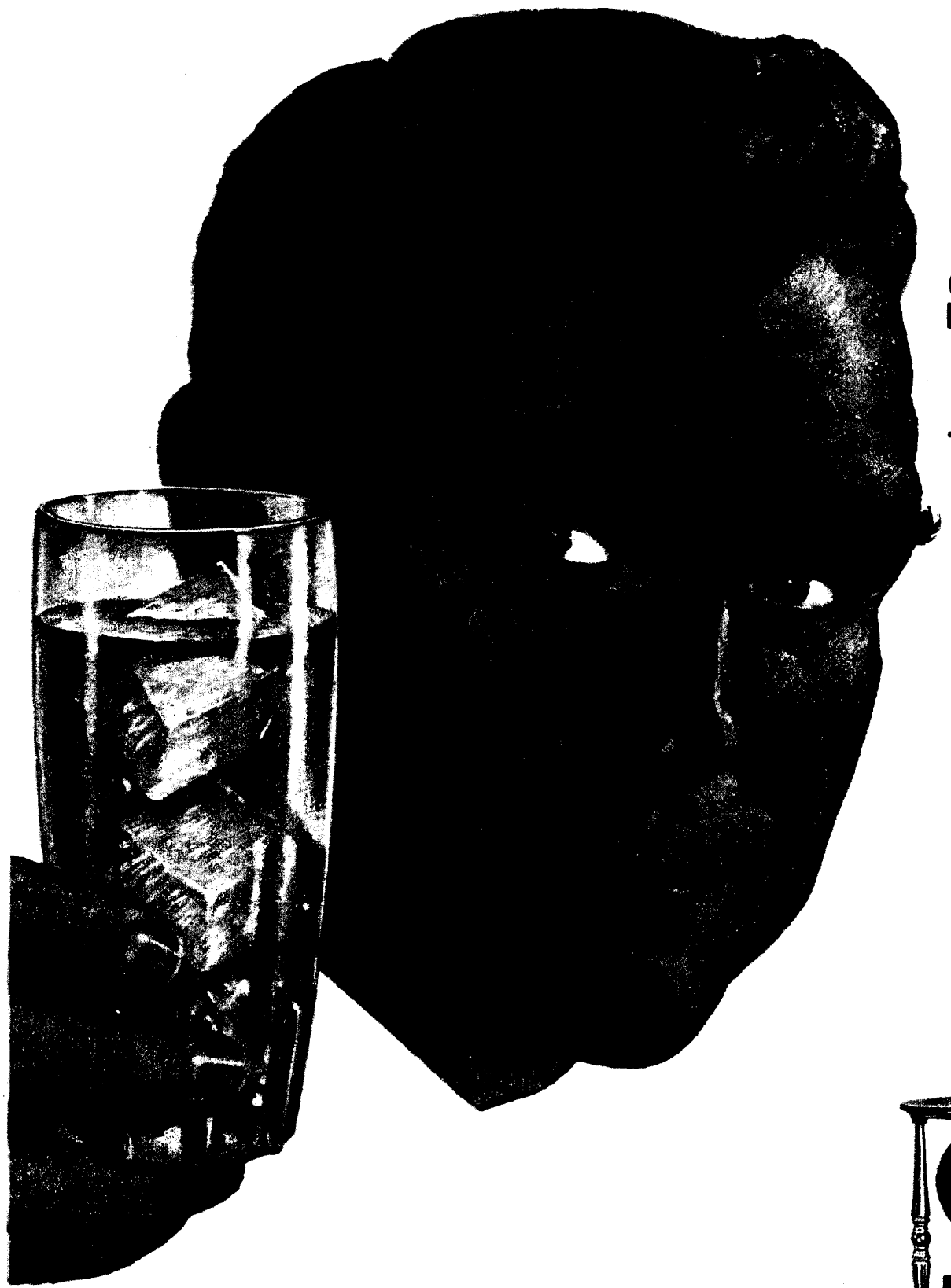

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